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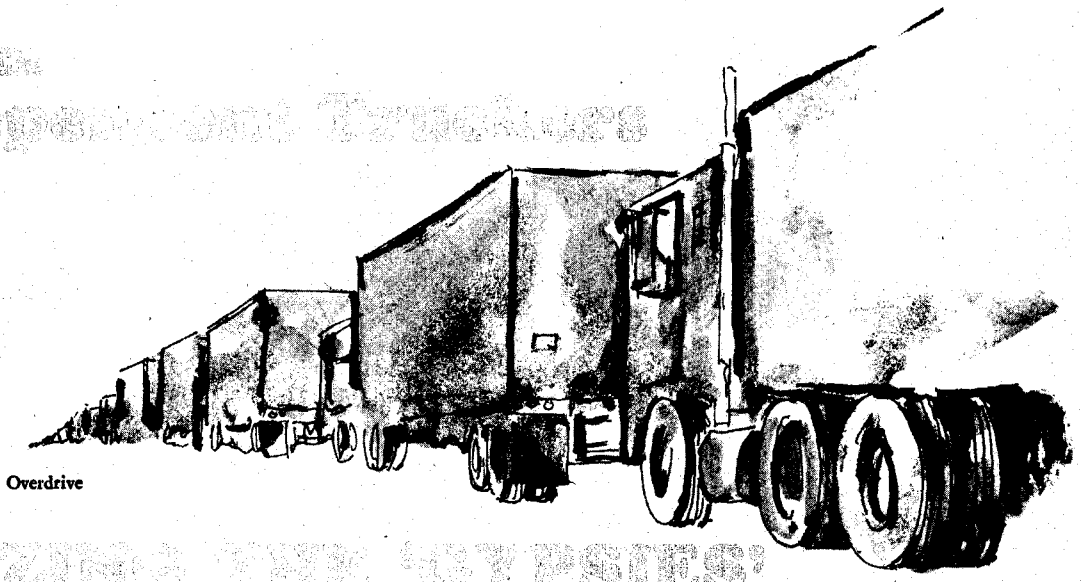

Overdrive

House Power Shift

THE CAUCUS vs. THE BARONS

Iric Nathanson

New Protest Movement

REACTING TO THE REACTORS

McKinley C. Olson

Special Poetry Issue

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LETTERS

no joke

Windsor, Vt.

Jules Archer's *The Plot to Seize the White House* may be "hard to take seriously" by your reviewer [*The Nation*, Dec. 7] who probably was not around in the first days of the FDR administration. For those who lived through this period the disclosures by the McCormack-Dickstein committee, censored and largely suppressed as they were, were nevertheless the greatest indictment of American Fascists, rightists, leading American Legion officers and big money interests of the time. And none of the un-American committees since has ever done anything at all worth noting about these same reactionary elements.

The biggest news story of the time was either suppressed by almost every newspaper in the country or, when suppression was impossible, it was ridiculed and treated as a comic opera plot. If a similar plot were discovered today, it might be said, in the light of Watergate, that it would be not only front-paged but lead to government action against a dozen leaders in politics, banking and the American Legion. Mr. Archer has told the facts of an important historic episode and his book deserves unstinted praise. *George Seldes*

the 'scientific' ploy

Cambridge, Mass.

References to Cambridge Survey Research, Incorporated, in your recent article ["Pollsters and Pundits: The Tricks of the Trade" by Lee Benson, Kevin Clancy and John Kushma, *The Nation*, Nov. 30] represent "punditry" at its worst. The authors describe the polling done by Evans and Novak with the words: "Apparently they tag along with some polling organization working for a client and conduct interviews with its sample of respondents. . . ."

Evans and Novak do their "mini-surveys" on their own. They choose the type of area they want to look at; professionals help them select that area and to structure their questions. The interpretations are entirely their own. That "astonishing productivity" your authors note results from the fact that Evans and Novak employ two or three of our professional interviewers on each job, as well as doing interviews themselves. . . .

Obviously Rowland Evans and Bob Novak aren't doing "scientific" research. I think they do not pretend to in their columns. Like all of us, they interpret results in the light of their own ideologies. Frankly, though, I think they found out more by making an effort to talk to voters than if they had sat in the faculty lounge at the University of Pennsylvania and imagined what the country is like. I disagree with many things they say, but I disagree far more with your authors' attempt to use unresearched rhetoric as a substitute for reasoned thought. . . . *John W. Gorman, Cambridge Survey Research*

Philadelphia, Pa.

With friends like John W. Gorman, do Evans-Novak need critics?

Our article asserted that "the increasing acceptance of scientific polling has led to the increasing use of voting polls by political pundits for nonscientific, *ideological* purposes." As one case in point, we characterized Evans-Novak "as ideologues masquerading as political observers" and cited their misuse of polling agencies, polls and polling techniques.

Against our criticism of Evans-Novak, Mr. Gorman deploys what might be called the everybody-does-it Cambridge boomerang defense. "Obviously Rowland Evans and Bob Novak," he writes, "aren't doing 'scientific' research. I think they do not pretend to in their columns. Like all of us, they interpret results in the light of their own ideologies."

We are pleased that Mr. Gorman supports our claim that

(Continued on page 17)

EDITORIALS

Playing Games with the CIA

The latest disclosures of CIA involvement in domestic political intelligence and surveillance, together with the resignation of James J. Angleton, chief of the counterintelligence unit, "for the good of the service," and three of his aides, focuses national attention once again on the agency that refuses to come in from the cold. There is nothing really surprising in *The New York Times* stories, based on leaks by junior level whistle blowers in the agency, about spying on students and the rest of it. The question is, how long will the CIA be permitted to function as a kind of secret government within the government? Once again we are promised "hearings" and "investigations." Predictably, the reports that will eventually issue from such inquiries will be at about the level of insight and relevance that former Atty. Gen. William Saxbe's report brought to the Cointelpro shenanigans of the FBI. For one thing, any Congressional inquiries will probably be conducted behind closed doors, with much talk about the necessity for secrecy. Some wrists will be slapped; some additional resignations will be forthcoming, but nothing substantial will happen. Suggestions for an "impartial panel" of the high-level type—which may be taken to mean a panel made up of retired generals, former heads of the CIA and members of the Council on Foreign Relations—are a stalling operation designed to divert public attention from the necessity for a thorough *public* airing of the agency's role, its budget, its personnel policies and its actual operations. There would of course be some risk in a public hearing, but it would be less than the risk involved in denying public, press and Congress information to which each is entitled—particularly in view of the deceptions in which the agency has engaged.

A public inquiry would illuminate the issues that demand attention. Consider, for example, the problem of personnel. When the CIA was set up, an effort was made to staff it exclusively with cold warriors, that is, with individuals wholly committed to the premises on which the cold war was being waged. The implicit assumption was that the ideology of "anti-communism" was not to be questioned. The effect was to create a staff that, whatever might be said of its educational and social backgrounds, was politically handicapped by the astigmatism inherent in its commonly shared assumptions. That such a staff could really understand revolutionary movements and motivations, or the politics of nations emerging from colonial status, has always been dubious. In recruiting personnel, agency officials have consulted faculty members known to be sympathetic to the same ideology. Samples of the intelligence reports submitted by a staff so recruited should be subjected to the closest scrutiny. For example, the notion expressed by Angleton in an interview that the KGB played a key role in student antiwar protests is, on its face, suspect; with so many valid and pressing reasons to protest the war in Vietnam, one need not assume KGB machinations to account for demonstrations. If the head of counterintelligence thinks in

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such terms, then the intelligence being proffered policy makers is dangerously misleading and inadequate.

Another point: there is no possible reason why the budget of an agency of the federal government should be partially concealed in the budgets of other agencies, so that only a few members of the Congress are even charged with knowing the CIA's actual budget and the categories into which it is divided. An intelligence agency does not need to spell out in detail exactly how and where each penny is spent, but it should not be permitted to engage in deceptive budgetary practices. Such an arrangement violates the Constitution and is calculated to make "oversight" or supervision a more or less meaningless exercise. Again: intelligence is in theory a supportive activity of law enforcement (in the case of the FBI) or of policy-making agencies (in the case of the CIA). But the CIA has always operated as a more or less independent action agency, pursuing at times its own objectives. Secrecy and lack of budgetary controls are responsible for this state of affairs. Officials of such an operation will lie "for the good of the agency." Senator Case and some of his colleagues are naive when they complain that CIA officials did not level with them. Did they really expect that Mr. Helms would tell them all he knew? Past attempts at "oversight" have been based on the assumption that almost total secrecy was required. If only a handful of Senators really know—or are charged with knowing—what the CIA is doing, they tend to become imbued with the spirit of the agency; they too become highly secretive. "Oversight" of the CIA is not attainable on such a casual basis. But the real issue that should be explored is whether, given the way in which it was set up, its history and the ease with which it has managed to escape close oversight or supervision, it would not be desirable to dismantle the CIA. There is constant need for the best intelligence to guide policy makers, but the task itself is much too important to entrust to an agency dedicated to the pursuit of cold-war objectives by methods that closely imitate those practiced by "the enemy." One may question Sen. Lowell Weicker's premise that meaningful Congressional oversight is attainable, but his assessment of the general situation is pertinent:

> For too many years, the American intelligence community has taken the Congress of the United States for granted; has treated our citizenry more like an audience than as participants in government. Fortunately, we have survived this period of besmirched constitutional rights. But with no thanks to established oversight systems. Neither can these abuses be dismissed as isolated instances of individual excesses. Not an agency but agencies plural were involved. Not one misstep but a trampling of constitutional democracy. The lesson is that accountability cannot be assured without meaningful Congressional oversight—oversight that has constancy, purpose and legislative power.

ITT and OPIC

After ITT tried to block his election in 1970, Salvadore Allende made use of a half-forgotten statute which enabled him to "intervene"—that is, take over for the time being foreign corporate holdings without tendering immediate compensation. Negotiations were later broken

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off when Allende claimed to have evidence that the corporation was attempting to bring down his regime. ITT's next move was to file a claim for $95 million with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the federal agency that writes "risk" insurance for overseas investments of U.S. corporations. Such claims must lie dormant for a year; hence ITT's claim did not mature until September 29, 1972. By then, elements in the Congress were beginning to be annoyed by evidence of the corporation's involvement with the CIA in efforts to "destabilize" the regime. As a result, OPIC, headed by Bradford Mills, a patrician Establishment type (Princeton A.B. '48, Oxford B. Litt. '50, member of the Council on Foreign Relations), decided that it would be tactful, just then, to reject the claim; the political pressures for rejection were considerable. A possible ground for rejection may have been a provision in the law to the effect that if the multinational corporation "provoked" expropriation at the request of our federal government or in the course of doing its bidding, the policy would be void. In any case, the claim then went to arbitration. The arbitration was conducted by the American Arbitration Association. Just recently the three arbitrators—Judge Richard Ammi Cutter, Justice Robert B. Williamson and Judge John Van Voorhis—held that the claim had been improperly rejected but left open the question of how much should be paid by way of compensation pending negotiations between ITT and the junta.

Now the junta has formally expropriated ITT's 70 per cent interest in the Chile Telephone Co. and has agreed to compensate the corporation to the tune of $125.2 million (not involved are two Sheraton hotels and a cable office in Santiago). The telephone property was valued by ITT at $116 million at the time it was "intervened" by Allende. There is to be a down payment of $10 million in interest-bearing letters of credit payable in 1975, and the balance will be paid in 10 per cent notes maturing semi-annually from January 1, 1975 to July 18, 1987. The total paid will be tax free. In addition, ITT will participate in a joint venture with the junta to the amount of $25 million in "the areas of nutrition and communications." ITT will also receive immediately $21 million in cash payment of past-due interest and principal on the utility's debt. What then happens to the pending arbitration of the claim against OPIC is uncertain. Inquiries which *The Nation* made at ITT's corporate headquarters were brushed off with the response that negotiations were proceeding both with OPIC and with the Chilean junta.

Several tentative conclusions can be drawn from this saga of high corporate finance and intrigue. The notion of insuring overseas investments by an agency backed by the full faith and credit of the federal government needs the most careful reconsideration. For one thing, OPIC—unless the junta bails it out on some of the Chilean expropriations—may well be insolvent. Founded in 1969, it carries $9.1 billion in insurance to protect multinational corporate investment from foreign expropriations (see article by Rep. Les Aspin, *The Nation*, September 14, 1974). If it realistically calculated its reserves, it would be overcommitted to the extent of some $227.4 million. And since the full faith and credit of the government is involved, it could tap Congress for whatever amounts might be needed to meet its commitments. As an investment OPIC must be rated as one of the less attractive ventures of the federal government. But worse, it encourages multinational corporations to take a high-handed attitude, as ITT did with the Allende government, and, by the same token, involves the federal government in the intrigues of such corporations. For example, the size of OPIC's potential liability to ITT has been cited as one of the reasons why the government tried, via the CIA, to play games in Chile. The new Congress should survey OPIC's operations from 1969 to date with special reference to how ITT finally makes out, what with tax deductions, OPIC assistance if any, and compensation from the junta. On balance, the risks are too great and the benefits, in terms of national interest, are too slight, to warrant the continuance of OPIC.

The Best Politics

Hiram Johnson, one of the canniest politicians, took the position that dabbling in patronage was not the best politics, that it seldom paid off in the long run. But his view has never been widely accepted. James Thompson, the brilliant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, insists on ignoring recommendations from party officials and ward bosses and makes staff appointments strictly on the basis of merit. However, even the remarkable reputation he has made for himself by adhering to this practice has not persuaded other politicians to follow his example.

Consider two posts recently filled by President Ford. It is hardly necessary to underscore the importance of our ambassadorships in India and Great Britain. Yet to India President Ford has sent William Saxbe, former Senator from Ohio and Attorney General, to succeed Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Moynihan feels that we neglect India, "a huge Asian democracy and there aren't many around. Half of the people who live in a society with civil liberties live in India. If that disappeared you would know it." Yet Moynihan, in his time, was named Ambassador for political reasons; it was thought necessary to get him out of Washington where his views had ceased to be acceptable to his patron, Richard M. Nixon. But his was not an offensive appointment. Sending Saxbe to New Delhi is an affront to the people of India. A self-styled "hush puppy and catfish man" (Washington *Star-News*, December 20), he is cheered by the report that the Ambassador's residence and garden in New Delhi are "fantastic. I hear that this year it won a prize for having the biggest pansies in the diplomatic corps." Very funny. Much like his remark, as Attorney General, that during the Joe McCarthy era, most intellectual Jews were enamored of the Communist Party. A man who makes offhand cracks of this kind is hardly to be regarded as the stuff of which great ambassadors are made. Saxbe was named as Attorney General solely because he could be confirmed without much fuss or inquiry, the Senate being always loyal to its own. No doubt Mr. Ford wanted Saxbe out as Attorney General—he should never have been named—but why afflict India with a man known principally for his irrepressible tendency to pop off? No doubt, also, the State

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Department will try to curb this tendency, but it is hard to escape the conclusion that Saxbe was sent to India because Washington is not much concerned about that country. In the two years Moynihan served there, he was visited by one Representative and four Senators—"one stayed sixteen hours and took his wife to the Taj Mahal and the other was on his way to Bangladesh and had to change planes"; the other two Senators were seriously interested in India. Was it really good politics, that is, practical politics, to name Saxbe to this post? One can guess that it will cause trouble for the Ford Administration—much more trouble than would have been caused if Saxbe had been told to return to Ohio and its catfish.

Or consider the nomination of Elliot Richardson to be Ambassador to Great Britain. On its face this is an excellent appointment; it is difficult to imagine anyone else the Ford Administration might have named who would have possessed similarly impressive qualifications and credentials. But this, too, was a political appointment. The idea, apparently, was to get Mr. Richardson out of the country and keep him abroad until well after the Republican convention in 1976. Indeed Melvin Laird, the most influential member of the "Kitchen Cabinet," was furious that Richardson had been named: he wanted Ronald Reagan sent to London for the same reason. Political motivation will not necessarily negate the effect of a good appointment; but the country would have been much better served if Mr. Richardson had been named Attorney General to replace Saxbe. It is too much to expect that politicians will not "play politics"—the verb is eloquent testimony to the level of our political culture—but why don't they see that the best politics in today's world is to choose the best man for the job, regardless of political considerations?

Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr.

This is the season when the *Congressional Record* bulges with tributes to departing colleagues, the retiring and the defeated and those who could stay if they chose but who have had enough of Washington. The tributes vary from perfunctory to sincere. There was nothing perfunctory about those paid to Sam Ervin. They filled 10 pages of the *Congressional Record* with regret that he was leaving and gratitude for what he had accomplished during his twenty years in the Senate.

Nor is that all that his country and his native North Carolina owe him. Before he came to the Senate, he served twenty-three years on the bench, the last six as a Justice of the state Supreme Court. Forty-three years of public service, and none of it wasted.

Among colleagues and critical watchers of the legislative process he was well-known from the first. *The Nation* too was a pre-Watergate admirer. He was of our own time, yet it seemed that something of the spirit of the early Republic lived on in him.

His retirement was consistent with his years of service. If he stood for re-election in 1974, he explained to his constituents, he would be asking them to let him serve for a term which would extend beyond his 84th year. "Since time takes a constantly accelerating toll of those of us who live many years," he told those who urged him to run again, "it is simply not reasonable for me to assume that my eye will remain undimmed and my natural force stay unabated for so long a time. . . ." He wanted the voters to get full value for the salary they pay a Senator.

Until the Watergate hearings Sam Ervin was not conspicuous, but that only shows that in politics memories are short. On August 2, 1954, the Senate established a select committee to report on Resolution 301: "Resolved, that the conduct of the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, is unbecoming a member of the United States Senate, is contrary to Senatorial traditions, and tends to bring the Senate into disrepute." Vice President Nixon, on the advice of leadership, appointed seven Senators to the committee, including the newest member of the Senate, Sam Ervin. McCarthy waited a few months before retaliating with his standard operating procedure: he attacked Ervin and two other committee Democrats as "unwitting handmaidens of the Communists." Ervin let McCarthy have it with both barrels. "The issue before the American people," he said on the floor of the Senate, "is simply this: Does the Senate of the United States have enough manhood to stand up to Senator McCarthy? . . . The honor of the Senate is in our keeping. I pray that Senators will not soil it by permitting Senator McCarthy to go unwhipped of Senatorial justice." The slightly archaic language only added force to the indictment.

Almost twenty years later Senator Ervin clarified for the Senate and the people an even more important issue. No one who heard him could doubt his fairness. If he had served his country only once in a matter where principles of the utmost gravity were at stake, he would have done more than falls to the lot of most legislators. The opportunity came to Sam Ervin twice. He succeeded both times, and not by luck. He came well prepared, he loved the law, he loved the Constitution; he was not only intelligent but wise.

It is hard to choose from among the valedictories that have been showered on him, but Senator Hatfield left little more to be said: "I simply want to thank him for being what he was. [He] has roused in me a new sensitivity for our constitutional roots, the peril of untrammeled government power, and the dignity of each individual citizen. . . . He has deeply impressed me with his humility, particularly at a time when all around us there are those who are impressed mainly with themselves. And he has enriched the language with the wit and wisdom so characteristic of his state, when so many resort to the colorless, meaningless language of the advertising age."

Purchased Testimony?

While Senator Ervin has retired to do a little fishing, his son, Sam J. Ervin 3rd, a North Carolina judge, has had a hot potato dropped in his lap. It concerns three blacks, T.J. Reddy, James Grant and Charles Parker, who were convicted in 1972 of setting a stable fire, in which fifteen horses perished. They are known as the Charlotte Three among those who care, who are not many. They have no prison records; if they are guilty of anything, it is black social activism, which is not a

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crime. Before they were caught in the toils of the law, Reddy and Grant were students at the University of North Carolina, while Parker was Reddy's assistant at the Charlotte anti-poverty center. Reddy is also a published poet (Random House). He is in jail for twenty years, Grant for twenty-five, Parker for ten.

How did three apparently respectable black men get into such a fix? The motive alleged by the prosecution is that they tried to hire livery riding horses, were rejected and burned down the stable in retaliation. The case rests on the testimony of two other black men, Walter T. Washington and Theodore A. Hood, who were arrested in 1970 during a racial disturbance on federal charges of manufacturing and possessing dynamite. They had long prior criminal records. Hood and Washington testified that the Charlotte Three had set fire to the stable. The three denied the charge but were convicted by a jury of eleven whites and one black.

Now comes the dirty work. After the three were convicted, their accusers received $3,000 apiece from the Department of Justice, and another $1,000 each for purposes of "relocation." They were also granted immunity for other offenses by Asst. Atty. Gen. Robert Mardian, one of the Watergate defendants. Washington and Hood are free on bail, although they face other charges for crimes allegedly committed after they were paid off. The prosecutors did not notify the defense of the payments to the accusing witnesses; on this and other grounds the defense is petitioning for a new trial.

In one of his poems, Reddy recalls that the trial judge labeled him "tactician, conspirator, over-educated revolutionary/Beyond rehabilitation." Reddy's comment is: "It is first our ignorance of what oppresses us/That keeps our minds and bodies enslaved." He certainly seems more temperate in his language than the judge who sentenced him.

Judge Ervin, who has had nothing to do with the earlier procedures in the case, has promised to rule on a new trial about January 25, after both sides have filed briefs. If he rules for the defense, the case will get a lot more attention than it has received heretofore. Probably, outside North Carolina, not one American in a thousand has heard of it.

'The Ascent of Man'

On January 7, Public Broadcasting inaugurates the thirteen-episode *Ascent of Man*, written and narrated by the late J. Bronowski and produced by the BBC. *Nation* readers will recall that our year-end issue in 1973, called "The Long Childhood," was derived from the final broadcast of the series; the entire work was subsequently published by Little, Brown.

The Ascent of Man was conceived as a counterpart to Kenneth Clark's *Civilisation*; *The London Telegraph* called it the iceberg of which Sir Kenneth surveyed the tip. And so it is, in the sense that, whereas Lord Clark brought to his audience the masterpieces of man's creative imagination, Bronowski recalls the eons of evolution and discovery that enabled the race to achieve those works. Taken together, the two series resolve the Two Cultures problem first expressed by C.P. Snow: man is the measure and both science and art are the expression of his presence on the earth. Bronowski, a scientist, was at the time of his death a fellow of the Salk Institute; he was also a dramatist, a poet and perhaps his generation's most perspicacious writer on William Blake. In him, thus, the Two Cultures became one.

CONGRESSIONAL POWER SHIFT

THE CAUCUS vs. THE BARONS

IRIC NATHANSON

> Resolved, that the Democratic members of the various committees of the house are directed not to report to the house during the first session of the Sixty-second Congress, unless hereafter directed by this Caucus, any legislation except with reference to the following matters. . . .
>
> —*From a resolution of the Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives April 1, 1911.*

Those were the days when the caucus was king of the House. In 1910, "Uncle Joe" Cannon, the Republican Speaker, had been stripped of his nearly dictatorial powers. Then, the next year, the Democrats took control of the House and built on the ruins of the Cannon speakership a new structure of power for themselves in the Democratic Caucus, to which all House Democrats owed at least nominal allegiance. Under the leadership of Majority Leader Oscar Underwood from Alabama, the Democratic Caucus became in the post-Cannon era the pre-eminent source of power and policy in Congress.

Legislation was written there. Only after key issues had been resolved in the caucus were major bills introduced in the House and referred to committees. Committee chairmen who presumed to buck the caucus were likely to run into a stone wall when their bills reached the Rules Committee, since most legislation needed Rules Committee clearance before it could reach the floor. In more modern times, the Rules Committee has become an independent center of power, but while Underwood was Majority Leader, the committee was under the firm control of the House leadership.

Iric Nathanson, an assistant to Rep. Donald M. Fraser (D., Minn.), is the author of several articles on Congressional affairs.

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During Woodrow Wilson's first term (1912-16) caucus government in the House of Representatives produced an impressive legislative record. Those years saw the creation of the Federal Reserve System, the establishment of the Federal Trade Commission, and the passage of the Clayton Antitrust Act.

In that period, while the Democratic steamroller moved through the House, the Republicans sat on the sidelines, fuming in frustration. In 1913, a Republican Representative from Minnesota, Sidney Anderson, took the floor to denounce what he called "King Caucus." Anderson angrily announced to his colleagues that he was resigning his seat on the Ways and Means Committee because the caucus system had shut him out of any meaningful participation in committee decision making:

> It is true that I am still permitted to cast my vote, but I do so with the foreknowledge that it will not count. It is true that I may still offer an amendment, but though the amendment be suggested by the Apostle Paul it could not be adopted. . . . I have had no part in the making of the tariff bill which passed the House and is now pending in the Senate. I shall have none. I am overwhelmed, discouraged, disheartened by uselessness and the terrible frustration of it all.

The Minnesota Congressman maintained that the caucus system ran roughshod over the rights of the minority: "The caucus not only destroys the minority but the minority of the majority, for it binds the votes of both the majority and the minority of the House against all suggestion, amendment and debate. . . ."

The Democratic Caucus still meets at the beginning of each new Congress to handle organizational business, as it did during the Underwood era, but this extralegal party group is not now the political force it once was.

All 291 Democratic members of the next Congress, the 94th, are automatically members of the caucus, which convened this year in December, more than a month in advance of the new session. As the organization of the House majority, the caucus has a variety of important responsibilities. It oversees the assignment of Democrats to committees. It elects committee chairmen (a recently established practice) and chooses the Speaker for each new Congress.

When Congress is in session, the caucus meets behind closed doors on the House floor, usually in the mornings before the House goes into session. Like the full House, it is governed by an elaborate set of rules and procedures. One rule, known as Rule 7, binds all Democrats to support policies agreed upon by two-thirds of their members. Another enables the caucus to instruct Democratic members of committees to report certain legislation to the floor. Those Democrats who refuse to obey caucus instructions can, in principle, be stripped of their seniority and denied committee assignments. In recent years, however, the caucus has been unwilling to discipline those who have flouted its dictates. House Speakers, including Sam Rayburn and John McCormack, have been wary of the caucus, using it mainly at the beginning of each new Congress to ratify decisions previously made by the House leadership.

Now, sixty-one years later, another Anderson, this one from Illinois, has taken the floor to warn that King Caucus is about to re-emerge. Republican Conference Chairman John Anderson, who heads the Republican equivalent of the Democratic Caucus, has been annoyed by caucus efforts to sidetrack a House committee reorganization plan. "There is considerable evidence accumulating," Anderson warned his colleagues earlier this year, "that indicates King Caucus is making a comeback in all the worst possible senses of that term, including secrecy, strict party unity and discipline, disregard for minority rights, restraints on the free operation of the legislative process in committees and on the floor, and resistance to meaningful reform."

Many liberal Democrats in the House maintain that a return to the Underwood era is neither desirable nor even possible. During the next Congress, they hope, nonetheless, to use the caucus as an instrument to bring House programs and policies more in line with those of the National Democratic Party. With a net gain of forty-three new Democratic seats, almost all to be occupied by liberal or national Democrats, reformers see the balance of power shifting toward them and away from the Republican-conservative coalition that has ruled the House for so many years.

Reformers have lost no time in initiating this power shift. With enthusiastic backing from most of the seventy-five newly elected Democrats, leaders of the Democratic Study Group, the informal organization of House liberals, succeeded in getting the caucus to adopt a series of historic reforms during the week of organizational meetings in early December. In themselves, these reforms will not necessarily lead to more effective Congressional government, but they will sweep away many of the procedural and political obstructions that have blocked the exercise of power by House liberals.

The thrust of the new policies is to strengthen the formal leadership structure of the caucus at the expense of the independent committee barons. In emphasizing the importance of the caucus and its executive group, the Steering and Policy Committee, House reformers tend to echo the views expressed by a young political scientist nearly ninety years ago. In *Congressional Government,* his classic study of the U.S. Congress, Woodrow Wilson described the caucus as "an antidote to the Committees. It is designed to supply the cohesive principle which the multiplicity and mutual independence of the Committees so powerfully tend to destroy."

One powerful committee chairman, Wilbur Mills, was a target of the reformers before his theatrical antics in Boston. In one of its first actions, the caucus stripped Mills and his fellow Democrats on the Ways and Means Committee of their authority to make committee assignments for other Democrats. This important organizational responsibility was transferred to the twenty-four-member Steering and Policy Committee, chaired by Speaker Carl Albert.

The caucus also expanded the Ways and Means Committee from twenty-five to thirty-seven members. This move, along with the new party ratios adopted for most committees, will enable the caucus to appoint ten new Democrats to Ways and Means when the new Congress

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Wilbur Mills

convenes in mid-January. Many caucus activists want to make sure that the newly appointed members of the tax-writing committee are committed in advance to the cause of tax reform, thus providing for the first time a solid pro-reform bloc on the committee.

The caucus has not attacked the seniority system head on, but it did move to exert increased control over those who reap the rewards of seniority, the chairmen of the twenty-two standing committees. Reforms adopted by the caucus during the last four years had already broken the tight hold of seniority by requiring that all chairmen face a vote of confidence at the beginning of each Congress. In 1971 and again in 1973 the most senior member of each committee was able to survive these votes of confidence, but at least the principle of elected chairmanships had been established.

As part of the reform package adopted in early December, a nominating procedure for chairmen was added to the election process already in place. The Steering and Policy Committee will now nominate chairmen with elections to follow in the caucus.

Some reformers believe that this new system will do much to eliminate the independent exercise of power that the seniority system has encouraged. Minnesota's Donald Fraser, a former chairman of the Democratic Study Group, thinks the Steering Committee will now have the formal authority it needs to coordinate legislative programs that cut across committee lines. Fraser explains that if, for example, the caucus adopts the seven-point economic program approved by the delegates to the Mid-term Democratic conference in Kansas City, the Steering Committee will be in a position to insist that this program begin to move through the House's formal committee system.

The Steering Committee will be able to call in the chairmen of those committees with jurisdiction over economic issues and ask them how and when they intend to start implementing the caucus program. In the past, a Wright Patman or a Wilbur Mills could afford to ignore the caucus, secure in the knowledge that he would not be held accountable. Now that cavalier attitude is inadvisable. Next year, Fraser speculates, if a chairman indicates that he is too busy to bother with the caucus program, he may find that he is not renominated to his committee leadership post in 1977.

At least one current chairman in addition to Wilbur Mills is already being threatened. Wisconsin's Henry Reuss, the fourth ranking Democrat on the Banking Committee, has announced that he may challenge the 81-year-old Wright Patman for the banking chairmanship when the caucus reconvenes in January. If Patman is toppled, his fellow chairmen are likely to get the message that House reformers mean business.

Now that the procedural victories have been won, some reformers, like Wisconsin's David Obey, are eager to move on to substantive issues. Obey wants to go back to the Underwood era, when the caucus set policy and then directed the committees to approve the appropriate legislation. The Wisconsin Democrat sees the need for a comprehensive caucus program dealing with inflation, unemployment, health insurance, energy and the environment.

The caucus' new chairman, Phillip Burton, may not be

Drawings by Pierotti

Carl Albert

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ready to move as far or as fast as Obey might like, but Burton is an outspoken liberal activist and a shrewd political operator. He is likely to push the caucus toward a more effective policy-making role in the House. The new caucus chairman's rough, aggressive style will be in marked contrast to the mild, bland approach that has characterized House leadership since the days of John McCormack. Soon after he was elected, Burton announced angrily that the caucus would have to start whacking "asses" to keep recalcitrant Democrats in line.

Democrats in the House would probably resist the tight discipline that would accompany the return of King Caucus to full power. But if they can make caucus government work for them during the next two years, they could find themselves leading a march to capture the White House for their party in 1976. □

Herefords, Holsteins and Hungary

EMERY NANASY

The nations of Central and Eastern Europe, whose economies are predominantly Socialist, are nevertheless in many ways coming to resemble the private enterprise countries of Western Europe and America. And the similarities are not only in the size, number and colors of Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola signs. Romania manufactures an auto, the Dacia, under a franchise from Renault. In Yugoslavia, plants owned by the government turn out cars under franchises from France (Citroën), England (Morris) and Italy (Fiat). Other popular cars in Eastern Europe are the Polsky Fiat and the Zsiguli (a Fiat-type car made in the USSR).

And while tourism declines in Western Europe, it is on the upswing in Eastern Europe, where prices are lower and the best places are less crowded and more exotic to Western eyes. American-made Chris-Craft houseboats ply Yugoslavian coastal waters of the Adriatic (and rent for $90 and $100 per day). Intercontinental Hotels, partly owned by American interests, are the leading luxury hotels of Prague, Budapest and Bucharest. Hungary's newest international hotel will be the Budapest Hilton, now being built in the Buda part of the Hungarian capital. The Hungarian Government is a partner in that enterprise.

Trade between the United States and Hungary is still small, but it has been growing in recent years, and if Hungary is ever granted favored nation status, in regard to tariffs, it will spurt. Hungary is a desirable trading partner because its stable economy has produced a steady rate of growth for the past decade. Increases of real income have offset the very slight inflation (perhaps 3 to 5 per cent a year), and Hungary has a favorable trade balance even with the USSR, its leading customer and supplier. There is no unemployment; in fact, there is a serious labor shortage. Hungary needs more young people to join the labor force; its population is aging, and new births are not adequate to offset the mass superannuation. At present, Hungarian Government policy regards the three-child family as ideal for rejuvenating the general population and augmenting the work force. Abortion laws have been somewhat tightened, and the government pays bonuses to families having three or more children. For the last five years, the government has been spending an average of $850 million annually on child-support programs.

As part of its economic growth program, Hungary has invested heavily in agricultural development. Since the early 1970s, special emphasis has been placed on the modernization of its beef cattle and dairy farming. The United States has been the supplier, to its considerable profit. Hungary needs a breed of beef cattle that will grow fast, subsist on pasture grass that is not too lush and withstand extremes of weather. The American Hereford Association obliged by shipping 445 head of cattle to Hungary in 1972. These were from Texas and South Dakota; later shipments of Herefords came from Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado and Oklahoma. The beasts caught on so well that 1,050 more went to Hungary in 1973 and 2,000 more in 1974.

On the dairy side, Hungary started in 1972 to receive Holstein cattle exported by the Holstein-Friesian Association of America (HFAA). Two years earlier, the first Holsteins imported from North America had come from Canada. Now the U.S. Holsteins are gaining over their Canadian counterparts (HFAA shipped 4,300 Holsteins to Hungary in 1974), while both North American breeds are displacing the Friesians imported from Holland and the native Hungarian tarka. The Canadian and U.S. Holsteins give more than twice as much milk as the tarka and more than one and a half times as much as the Dutch Friesians. (American Holsteins are enjoying similar successes in Yugoslavia, and the genetic base of the Israeli Friesian breed, the world's top milk producer, is mostly U.S. Holstein, with some Canadian Holstein and Dutch Friesian.)

Those cattle exports to Hungary, which have meant so much to both shippers and receivers, emphasize the folly of the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba. Since 1960, a reported 15,000 to 20,000 head of Holsteins have been exported to Cuba from Canada. That is great for Cuba's dairy industry, and for Canada's agricultural exports, but it leaves U.S. cattle exporters out in the cold. The Holstein-Friesian Association gets about $750 per head, for open (not yet bred) Holstein heifers, so the money involved is not trivial.

While the exports of dairy and beef cattle from

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the United States to Hungary have been an unqualified success for both countries, another international project under development could prove even more important in the long run, and in the larger world picture. That is the Corn Production System (CPS) a joint U.S.-Hungarian corporation, with headquarters in Chicago and at Bábolna State Farm in north central Hungary. A CPS office in Vienna maintains company data in computers (this will be transferred to Bábolna, when the necessary equipment is installed), and a business office in Zurich handles other foreign contacts. Most of the experimental seed and the ideas come from Chicago, where agronomists have been working with 180 types of hybrid corn.

The CPS scheme originated in Iowa, where it was applied efficiently in that state's cornfields; it was then modified for possible European use, and tried out at Bábolna. By 1970, the test runs had been completed, and farms started to sign up as junior partners in the network. To qualify for a CPS contract, a farm must put a minimum of 790 hectares (nearly 2,000 acres) into corn production and agree to all of the regulations promulgated by the parent body. That means the use of the company's standardized methods of production, including seed, pesticides, fertilizers and farm machines. Before starting production, member farms must have their soils analyzed by CPS agronomists, who advise them as to which types of seeds will work best, and which types of pesticides are best to use.

CPS began operations in 1971, with about 75,000 acres of corn, all on Hungarian farms. By 1974, the CPS corn territory had grown to 565,000 acres, the average production per acre had increased substantially, the quality of the corn had improved, and some farms in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Ukraine were added to the company rolls. Each participating farm gets its full complement of farm machinery (along with seed, pesticides and fertilizers) on credit, and pays for the machines with deliveries of corn to CPS over a five-year period, like the amortization of a mortgage. Such corn is sold within Hungary, or abroad, mostly in Western Europe, at world market prices. Originally, most of the farm machines were John Deere: the combines were supplied by Claas, a West German manufacturer. In 1971, International Harvester underbid John Deere by more than a million dollars, and since then has supplied CPS with tractors, harrows, seed planting machines, cultivators, plows and fertilizer spreaders.

Thanks to CPS, Hungary has developed its corn farming program very rapidly, and taken its place among the world's leading corn producing nations. International Harvester is making handsome profits, the American and Hungarian CPS partners are improving their incomes by their exports, and Hungary is in a position to export corn to nations that are desperately short of grain for human consumption. Should the United States need to buy corn, it has a convenient source in a company that is half American.

Another example of American-Hungarian cooperation is to be found in the little village of Rakaca (population 1,139) in northeast Hungary. It was there that John Lebick was born in 1894. In 1907, he left a village that had little to offer, emigrated to the United States, settled in Philadelphia and prospered. When he returned home for a visit in 1964, he saw that his native village was in great need of a library, and proposed to the local community that one be built. To get it started, he promised to pay part of the construction costs: the library was built, and opened in November 1972. John Lebick and his wife, Ilona, who was born in a different part of Hungary, attached no strings to their gift. They asked only that a memorial tablet be placed on the library's outside wall, in honor of their son, Ernest, who died in World War II, and to commemorate John's mother, who lived and died in Rakaca.

To appreciate what that building means to Rakaca, one has only to consider that the village first got electricity in 1960, and that its houses still do not have inside plumbing. In such a small and backward community, the library and the activities that it can house are capable of producing fundamental changes in the village's life style. Besides being a library, the building is also a museum of folk art, a cultural center and a clubhouse.

The Rakaca Library is a bridge of understanding that spans an ocean, a large expanse of Europe, and a sea of distrust between nations with differing political and economic systems. It is a cultural bridge, as the Hereford and Holstein exports and the CPS operations are business bridges. Such bonds are good for ailing economies, and they work for lasting peace. □

THE INDEPENDENT TRUCKERS

ORGANIZING THE 'GYPSIES'

HARRY MAURER

For the nation's independent truckers—the 150,000 men who own and operate heavy-duty diesel rigs—the energy-starved months of last winter were a time of mixed joy and desperation. First they were driven to the brink of bankruptcy by skyrocketing costs, fuel shortages and the 55-mph speed limit. Then, in two whirlwind months beginning with highway blockades on December 3, they abandoned their traditional isolation and coalesced into a powerful movement. Their nationwide shutdown in February throttled truck traffic, crippled industries, provoked widespread violence and (according to some sources)

Harry Maurer is at work on a book about the trucking industry. He wrote the article here published on a grant from the Fund for Investigative Journalism.

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nearly caused President Nixon to declare martial law. For many Americans the shutdown ominously foreshadowed future struggles over scarce resources. But the truckers saw it as merely the first step toward eliminating long-held grievances.

A year later, the truckers are searching for the second step. Most agree that the shutdown helped a little, with four gains being mentioned most often: direct financial relief; publicity about owner-operators (witness NBC's new series, *Movin' On)*; the emergence of leaders with national stature, and a sense of common purpose. But setbacks are obvious, too, most of them caused by the collapse of high expectations. Generally speaking, truckers who benefited from the shutdown gained just enough to stay on the road, and are still fighting for their economic lives. Others lost so much money that they went out of business. And the truckers' two leading spokesmen, Mike Parkhurst of *Overdrive* magazine and Bill Hill of the Fraternal Association of Steel Haulers (FASH), have added to the disillusionment by carrying on a bitter public feud.

Nevertheless, the movement survives, a bizarre and fascinating phenomenon with a paradox at its heart. Owner-operators are characterized by their deep-rooted, aggressive individualism; yet it seems they must band together to survive. How can they build an effective organization without sacrificing the freedom that defines them, that draws them to the job in the first place? Hill, Parkhurst and other leaders give conflicting answers. They agree only that the process will require time and patience—or another catastrophe like the Arab oil embargo, which might again push the truckers beyond the point of endurance.

Even in the best of times, the typical independent trucker works very hard for a living. He carries two mortgages: one on his house, the other on a $40,000 mobile business with five axles, eighteen wheels, thirteen forward speeds, 350 horsepower and as many chrome frills as he can afford. He spends most of his time on the road, averaging 100,000 miles a year and hauling anything from avocados to jet engines. His job is exhausting, dangerous and full of aggravations like hostile policemen and Sunday drivers. An incredible tangle of statutes governing every facet of trucking makes it almost impossible for him to operate within the law. He is a hustler by nature, but still a proud member of the middle class, politically conservative, living in a suburb or small town.

Almost every kind of commodity except agricultural produce and livestock is classified as regulated freight, and because the Interstate Commerce Commission (the federal agency which oversees the motor freight industry) is stingy with permits to haul regulated freight, the average trucker leases his rig to a large trucking company that has such a permit. This saves the company a huge investment in equipment and maintenance. It also puts the trucker in a limbo between labor and management. He is paid a percentage of the truck's revenue, which he hopes will amount to a salary for driving, plus a profit on the equipment. He may gross $50,000 annually, but his costs—fuel, lodging, food, tools, repairs, insurance, etc.—can run as high as $3,000 a month.

A major presence in the trucker's life is, of course, the Teamsters union, whose members coexist with owner-operators in a climate of mutual suspicion. Union men call the independents "gypsies," meaning everything the word implies: devious, restless, prone to illegality, poised on the poverty line. For their part, independents boast that "The Teamos hate us because they can't control us." Still, many owner-operators are also Teamsters, usually because they work for unionized companies. Some are satisfied with the benefits of membership; others say they get nothing for their dues and have no voice in union affairs. Teamster officials hotly deny charges that they try to drive independents out of business, but few Teamsters would mourn if the gypsies suddenly vanished.

Owner-operators, then, have their share of problems in a normal year—and 1973 was a disaster. In May diesel fuel cost an average 31¢ a gallon. Just five months later, in the wake of the Yom Kippur war and the oil embargo, it stood at 50¢ or more, depending on the seller's greed and the buyer's desperation. Simply *finding* fuel became a time-consuming nightmare. Often a driver, after waiting in line, could buy enough to go only 150 miles. To make things worse, other costs inflated outlandishly; tires, for example, rose from $90 to about $130. None of this hurt drivers of company-owned trucks, since the employer paid all costs; but owner-operators were working seventy-hour weeks only to find themselves in the red.

The final blow came in November, when the Federal Energy Office dropped the speed limit to 55. This meant that every run took longer, thus cutting income. Ironically, it also increased consumption of fuel, since trucks are geared to run most efficiently at higher speeds. The owner-operators now faced revenue losses of 25 per cent, and the country seemed utterly deaf to their complaints. Soon the word "shutdown" began to circulate in truck stops and on Citizens' Band (CB) radio, over which truckers talk to one another.

On December 3, three truckers known on the CB as Dopey Diesel, Big Sissy and Doggy Daddy staged the first protest. They pulled to a halt on Interstate 84 at the Connecticut-New York State line and blocked traffic for ninety minutes. Later that evening another blockade formed on Interstate 80 near Blakeslee, Pa. This one lasted all night and won nationwide publicity. A participant later described the blockaders' logic: "We figured if trucks could do without fuel, the country could damn well do without trucks." As he and his colleagues well knew, the country had more to lose.

Ever since the 1940s the United States has been increasing its dependence on trucks. The vast program of highway construction that was stimulated by our abundant supply of oil has allowed the trucking industry to pry an ever larger share of the nation's freight from the railroads. Between 1940 and 1970 the total ton-miles logged by trucks shot up more than 600 per cent, whereas railroad ton-miles only doubled. In 1972, truck drivers traveled 230 billion miles, collected $19 billion for their work and registered 2.4 million new trucks to add to the almost 20 million already on the road. Today trucks carry most of our appliances, drugs, clothing, food and drink, as well as large amounts of other essentials like building materials, machinery, furniture and timber.

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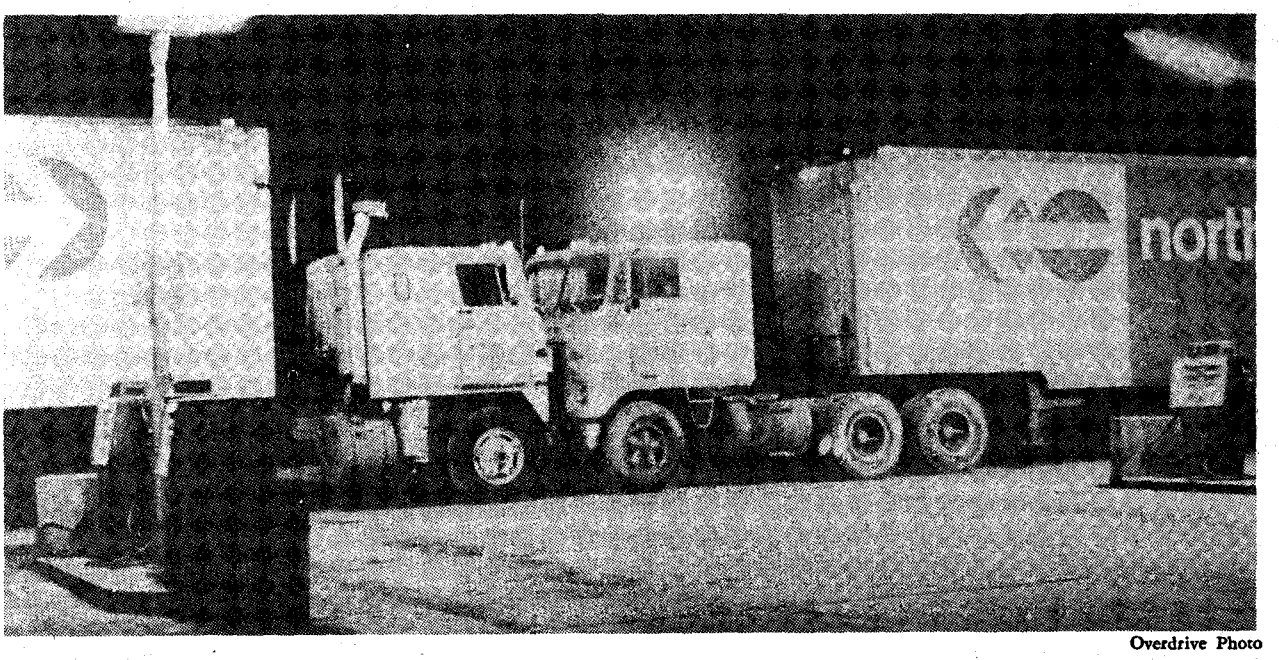
Owner-operators form only a part of this traffic; they number perhaps one-third of the long-distance drivers, own about 40 per cent of the heavy-duty rigs and tend to haul the least lucrative freight. But their power outweighs their numbers because they transport most of the country's food and raw steel.

Given this potential stranglehold, it seems odd that owner-operators were so docile so long. As one of them told me, "You probably won't believe this, but before the shutdown a lot of people didn't even know we existed." The reasons for this are complicated, but a major factor is the average trucker's 19th-century outlook. He breathed in the myths of Horatio Alger and the Old West with the air of his Midwestern town or farm, and he hit the road looking for the frontier and planning to get rich against all odds. "That farm background, that independent



Overdrive Photo

A Fort Wayne Truck Stop Blockaded on January 31

background has a hell of a lot to do with our problems in trying to organize," says Bill Hill of the Steel Haulers. "All these guys have that American dream, man, that they're gonna work hard and they're gonna be millionaires. And they'll own their own trucking company some day. Bullshit. . . . Pretty soon they phase out of that and say 'Fuck it, if I can just keep *this* truck goin' I'll be O.K.' "

Hill estimates that a meager 30 per cent of owner-operators last in the business, and other guesses range as low as 10 per cent. The fierce competition among truckers is another reason that they resist organization. But in any case, financial security is not their only goal; if it were, they could work as salaried drivers. The investment in a truck buys something else: the freedom to run their own lives.

This was impressed upon me during a trip with a Los Angeles furniture hauler named Chris. "I love it, the loneliness," he shouted one night as we sped through Portland. "It gives me time to sit and think things out. I don't even hang around in truck stops. Slows me down. I just go out and do my thing." The "thing" is essentially to keep rolling. Truckers see themselves as embodying the romantic tradition of fur trappers and cowboys. A whole genre of country music celebrates the trucking myths, and the men listen avidly as they drive.

The energy crisis, therefore, dealt a stunning shock to the truckers' philosophical and political framework. They believed passionately in free enterprise but they were going broke. They had voted eagerly for Richard Nixon but he was ignoring them. They called themselves independent but their livelihoods clearly hinged on the Arabs, the government, the oil companies—and one another. It was time for a change in their thinking.

The man who personifies that change is Mike Parkhurst. After working as an owner-operator through the 1950s, he quit thirteen years ago to combat "injustices, harassment and robbery" suffered by truckers. "I thought the best way to help them was to start an association," he recalls, "but the only way to start one would be to have a voice or some means of reaching truckers, so I started the magazine in order to start an association, really." The magazine was *Overdrive*. Today this Hollywood-based "Voice of the American Trucker" runs to 150 glossy pages every month, has a circulation of about 55,000 (mostly newsstand sales in truck stops) and justly claims to have paved the way for the truckers' revolt.

Parkhurst is a complex figure. A small, stocky, modish 41-year-old who fits no one's image of a truck driver, he has been called "part con man, part evangelist, part hard-nosed editor, part crusader and part shrewd businessman." Politically, he terms himself a "radical conservative," meaning he dislikes big business, big labor (especially the Teamsters) and all forms of socialism.

Parkhurst founded *Overdrive* in September 1961. He opened with a sledge-hammer campaign against filthy, poorly run truck stops: "Right from the very first issue," he says proudly, "we started antagonizing the very men

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on whom we would have to depend for circulation—the truck stop operators." And this willingness to antagonize has not faded over the years. Many abuses have been eliminated in the wake of *Overdrive* articles, including faulty truck hardware, speed traps and traffic court systems notorious for soaking truckers. Each month the magazine delivers a rich blend of exposés, technical reports, business advice, cheesecake and fluff that has made it by far the most important trucking journal.

However, since 1961 *Overdrive*'s emphasis has switched from the minutiae of trucking to broader concerns. This reflects a change in Parkhurst. "My own expertise has shifted away from the technical aspects to the political . . . ," he says. "Now, instead of a big headline about a truck stop, it'll be about a bill in Congress or a $50 million swindle by the Teamsters union."

Parkhurst's association for truckers failed in 1962 but took hold in 1966. Called Overdrive Roadmasters, it is not an overt pressure group; for annual dues ranging from $18 to $144, truckers buy varying degrees of insurance coverage, financial advice and help in case of arrest. But a political motive lies between the lines. By joining Roadmasters, a trucker in effect endorses *Overdrive,* since the two are hard to separate. So the association provides a power base for its nonelected chief, Parkhurst. He will not reveal the number of members, hinting that "They own about 20,000 trucks; we added them up last year. That means there's less than 20,000 members, a *lot* less."

The membership question is important because the owner-operators have no undisputed leader. Parkhurst, with his political expertise and long record of accomplishments, would seem to have the best claim. But in December and January dozens of trucking groups sprang up, boasting more members than there are truckers in the country; and Parkhurst found himself on the sidelines of the truckers' movement, completely frustrated and understandably bitter.

For Parkhurst, the Great Revolt began on December 3 with a call from Blakeslee: "Hey, we blocked the goddamn Interstate. A bunch of dumb truckers are going to shut down the country!" In the chaotic month that followed, the truckers relied heavily on Parkhurst as they struggled to organize. He coordinated blockades, besieged officials, tirelessly explained the issues to the press, and directed a nationwide shutdown on December 13 and 14. But the government ignored the two-day stoppage, and Parkhurst began planning for the Real Shutdown (as *Overdrive* advertised it) on January 31.

By then, however, the conditions for leadership had changed. Every region in the country had new trucking organizations with leaders who saw no reason to defer to Parkhurst. At a meeting on January 23, delegates from nineteen of these groups elected a six-man Truckers Unity Committee to represent them during the shutdown. Parkhurst won a seat but insists that "It was a fake Unity Committee in the first place. Even though I was on it, I objected to it for the simple reason that I knew these other people did not represent who they claimed." He was correct, but that no longer mattered—the committee was now the "official" arm of owner-operators, and its success would depend on the members' ability to share power. In that respect, Parkhurst was outshone by the man who became chairman of the committee: Bill Hill.

As head of FASH, Hill was the only person who could rival Parkhurst's authority to speak for owner-operators. FASH was born in 1967, the outgrowth of a bloody wildcat strike among Steel Haulers who were dissatisfied with Teamster representation. The organization is a full-fledged labor union which directly threatens Teamster domination of the steel industry. Although in 1970 the National Labor Relations Board prevented the Steel Haulers from officially leaving the Teamsters, FASH has enrolled a good many drivers who do not belong to the Teamsters, and its mere existence has forced the much larger union to give the Steel Haulers better terms. FASH is a small group—press estimates of 10,000 to 20,000 members are probably far too high—but it has ten chapters spread across the Eastern industrial belt, where Hill is respected for his challenge to the Teamsters.

The contrast between Hill and Parkhurst is sharp and significant, reflecting as it does the worker/capitalist schizophrenia of the truckers' movement. Hill, unlike his rival, looks the part of a labor leader: he is a massive, square-built man with a booming voice that adds to his stature. He is foulmouthed, religious, pure working class, while Parkhurst is bourgeois, intellectual, business-oriented. Also, Hill is a man who leans instinctively to compromise, whereas Parkhurst is more a radical. These differences could not remain buried for long.

At 12:01 A.M. on January 31, 1974 the roar of diesel engines began to fade across the country. Most owner-operators stopped driving voluntarily; those who didn't found the highways had become overnight a combat zone that many compared to Vietnam. The first death came that afternoon, when a trucker crashed after a rock shattered his windshield. Other methods of persuasion to join the shutdown included sniper fire, slashed tires, beatings and threats. Less violent activists blocked fuel pumps and tried to talk their colleagues around. On February 2 the National Guard mobilized in Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, partly to prevent bloodshed, partly to ride shotgun for truckers running in convoys.

Along with violence, the shutdown immediately brought factory layoffs to the heavily industrialized East. But the federal government remained inactive, so it was left to Gov. Milton Shapp of Pennsylvania—whose steel-dependent state was among the hardest hit—to call the Unity Committee to Washington for negotiations. This caused the final split within the committee. Parkhurst branded Shapp's initiative a "publicity gimmick," thus condemning himself to isolation in California. Hill and the rest of the committee arrived in the capital on February 3, armed with demands that included a rollback of fuel prices, a public audit of the oil companies and unlimited supplies of fuel at truck stops.

The "bargaining" that followed hardly merited the name, since the Nixon administration refused to budge on any point. This was partly because the contest was so uneven: the government far outweighed the truckers in power, negotiating experience and ability to use the press. Even more important were other factors that made government concessions unlikely. These included:

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¶The oil companies. Nixon's approach to the energy crisis was to blame everyone but the industry that was earning record profits. This fit in with his big-business leanings, and with the fact that oil industry donations to his 1972 campaign totaled about $5 million. The administration's line, as explained to the truckers by then energy czar William Simon, was that huge oil profits were needed to finance the search for more energy. So the demands for a price rollback and an audit were categorically ruled out.

¶The Teamsters. Both for reasons of his own and because of ties to Nixon, Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons opposed the shutdown. He feared the rise of a rival trucking union that might tempt dissident Teamsters. And while the links between him and Nixon are too many and complex to detail here, the most important should be mentioned. In December 1971, Nixon freed James Hoffa from prison by commuting his sentence for jury tampering and fraud. This pleased the Teamster rank and file, who still idolize Hoffa. What pleased Fitzsimmons was a condition barring Hoffa from union politics until 1980. (Hoffa is now suing to end the restriction, charging that Fitzsimmons and others conspired against his civil rights.)

The 1972 Nixon campaign admitted receiving $40,000 from the Teamsters, and the real amount may have been much higher. So it was not surprising that Fitzsimmons should thunder against the shutdown—or that administration officials should publicly praise his "responsible" leadership, while condemning Hill and his "handful of desperadoes," as Nixon called the independents.

¶Watergate. Last February Nixon was sinking. He badly needed something to improve his standing, and observers felt that his intransigence during the shutdown was an attempt to profit from a desperate situation. A long shutdown, combined with Nixonian propaganda portraying the strikers as villains, might have turned the public against them. Nixon then could have become a hero by using the Army to move freight.

In fact, such a move was threatened by William J. Usery Jr., head of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, who represented the government in the talks. On February 7 he delivered Nixon's last offer to the Unity Committee. They had an hour to take it or leave it, he said, warning that rejection might force the government to bring out the troops. It was a tense moment, far more so than most Americans realized. The effects of the strike were spreading: 100,000 workers had been laid off and panic buying of food was reported in some cities. Governor Shapp was not alone in feeling afterward that "We barely averted martial law in this nation."

The proposed agreement featured a 6 per cent rate surcharge for regulated trucking companies. This would be paid to the men who bought the fuel, thus compensating owner-operators for higher costs. Also, truck stops would get 100 per cent of their diesel needs. There were other vague promises. It was an inflationary, inadequate offer, but the committee felt it was all they could get. Hill told a press conference that they would recommend it to their membership.

The shutdown promptly dissolved in chaos. Lacking good communications and a forum for voting, drivers trickled back to work, even though few of them liked the settlement. Its most glaring fault was that a large number of owner-operators—haulers of nonregulated freight—would not get the 6 per cent surcharge. And those who did get it knew it would hardly cover their losses.

Overdrive's March issue spoke for the disappointed: "The Big Sellout!" trumpeted the cover, and the invective inside surpassed even Parkhurst's high standard. He ascribed the shutdown's failure to poor organization and "headline-hunting leaders." The solution, he wrote, was a new shutdown on May 13—"And *this* time, just one voice, one clear, strong voice is needed."

But one voice was not enough. When May arrived, the truckers were still working frantically to recover from the winter. The oil embargo was over and fuel was plentiful. Though some truckers did stop driving, Parkhurst's shutdown never took hold, making it clear that *Overdrive* alone could not mobilize the owner-operators.

Since May, gloom has prevailed on the highways. Recently I asked a Kansas meat hauler if he was working on a thin profit margin. "Profit margin? *Profit* margin?" he said, giving me a hard stare. "Huh! That ain't even funny." Truckers like him are struggling to meet payments on their rigs, and the movement is suffering a letdown aggravated by the feud between its leaders. Hill calls Parkhurst an egomaniac; *Overdrive* portrays Hill as a traitor. Many drivers share the pessimism of Harold Kellis, former member of the Unity Committee, who thinks "We may be seeing the last of the owner-operators." And even the most sanguine leaders emphasize patience. "Any movement among independent truckers takes a long time," says Parkhurst. "It's not going to be an easy battle."

For both Hill and Parkhurst the crux of the owner-operators' problem is their fuzzy legal status. Are they employees or small businessmen? Haulers of nonregulated freight are true independent contractors; they work on their own and are free to compete by lowering rates. But haulers of regulated freight can neither compete nor unionize. They must lease their rigs to certified carriers who set the terms of the lease. And they cannot strike for better terms because they are considered businessmen, and *striking therefore would constitute restraint of trade.*

Hill believes that owner-operators should be exempted from antitrust laws so they could unionize. This position is risky, since many truckers distrust unions, but Hill feels that collective bargaining would best meet their needs. "Maybe I shouldn't use the term 'union,' maybe I should say 'a strong association that could bargain collectively,'" he says, laughing. "But I figure, why bullshit 'em?"

Parkhurst takes the opposite approach. He is pushing a bill (which so far lacks a Congressional sponsor) that would permit owner-operators to haul any type of freight without a license. This would affirm their independent status by allowing them to compete against the big fleets. It would also help eliminate their biggest grievance: "deadheading," or running empty. As things stand now, truckers often must deadhead because they can't find a load of the freight they are licensed to haul. This costs everyone money by wasting fuel, time and carrying capacity.

Parkhurst's bill is opposed by the Teamsters, by large trucking companies and by truckers who carry the more

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lucrative regulated freight. They all fear increased competition, warning that "chaos" would result. But supporters of the measure, including several economists, reply that chaos already exists. They point out that many truckers now survive only by hauling illegal freight. And they criticize the ICC for protecting the industry it is supposed to regulate, thus promoting inefficiency and feeding inflation.

While this controversy simmers, the truckers face a more urgent question: will there be a shutdown this winter? Hill and Parkhurst know they are powerless to call a strike over issues of their choosing. But if trucking conditions move from bad to intolerable, another revolt could well break out. At present, two widely expected developments could have such an effect: war in the Middle East with a consequent oil embargo, or the imposition of a sharply higher tax on fuel.

In this context, Hill's comment on the last shutdown is instructive: "Now, fuel was the key to this whole thing. . . . You know why that strike was so successful? Because the men couldn't get enough fuel to go up and down the road and continue to chase the fuckin' carrot." If the government has learned that lesson, it should have no trouble keeping truckers on the road by carefully allocating fuel at a price they can afford. If not, the Unity Committee (in its new incarnation, the National Independent Truckers Unity Committee, with Hill presiding over twenty-three member groups) has already polled its members and won authorization for a shutdown on January 31 of this year.

In the meantime, the truckers—like most Americans—continue to chase a receding carrot. They are angry and bewildered by rising prices, a sinking economy, and a government that is doing little to help them survive or even to help them understand what is happening. Perhaps the man to sum it up is Art Kellet, an owner-operator from Sykeston, Mo. "My Lord," he says in a soft drawl, "a few more months of this and I'll be under a bush with a pint of muscatel. . . . I shut down two weeks in February, four days in May, and you know what? I kinda understand why the younger generation puts on all these demonstrations and shit—'cause they can't get nobody to hear 'em!" There is faint amazement in his voice as he listens to himself.

I ask if there will be another shutdown. He answers, simply: "I wish to God there was." □

NEW PROTEST MOVEMENT

REACTING TO THE REACTORS

McKINLEY C. OLSON

The first national conference against nuclear power, which met in November, could be the start of a nationwide crusade that might gather as much support and generate as much controversy as did the anti-war movement a decade ago. In fact, there are decided similarities between the two issues, along with some marked differences. A multibillion-dollar government-industrial commitment helped to escalate the war, and the same holds true today for atomic energy; but unlike Vietnam, there seems to be little popular support for nuclear power. As Sen. Mike Gravel (D., Alaska) said recently, "It is significant to note that the grass-roots opposition to nuclear power far exceeds the grass-roots support, if any, for nuclear technology." Nevertheless, with fifty reactors operating, sixty-nine under construction, and 200 more being talked about, there is strong pressure to make the United States highly dependent upon nuclear energy by the year 2000. And that is what the widely scattered anti-nuclear citizens' movement is dead set to stop.

Ralph Nader and members of his team, in an attempt to unify this fragmented grouping, called the gathering in Washington, D.C. to "provide a national focus on the risks and consequences of nuclear fission and expand the citizen base . . . to move toward a nuclear power moratorium." The November 15-16 conference was well organized; it attracted a host of prominent scientists, a sprinkling of celebrities and members of Congress, and more than 1,000 representatives of anti-nuclear groups from around the country—organizations whose names are well known in the nuclear movement (the Union of Concerned Scientists, Friends of the Earth, National Task Force Against Nuclear Pollution, Natural Resources Defense Council, Committee for Nuclear Responsibility) as well as a flowering of local groups like Koshkonong Alert, New England Coalition Against Nuclear Power, and the North Anna Environmental Alert. They spent two days together milling through the halls of the Statler Hilton Hotel, crowding into busy workshop sessions and packing the large Presidential Ballroom to hear a parade of speakers document a basic allegation—that atomic fission power is one of the most dangerous threats to survival that the human race has ever faced.

The conference was called Critical Mass '74, and its theme was Nader-coined: "A nuclear catastrophe is too big a price to pay for our electric bill." All the delegates received a 161-page *Citizen Manual on Nuclear Power '74*, complete with 30 extra pages of classic anti-nuclear quotes and a listing of books and other source materials on nuclear power. It was typical of Nader to call the well-illustrated, detailed anti-nuclear text a package of "information tools for citizen action." The workshops bore such titles as Plutonium Dangers, How to Organize Against

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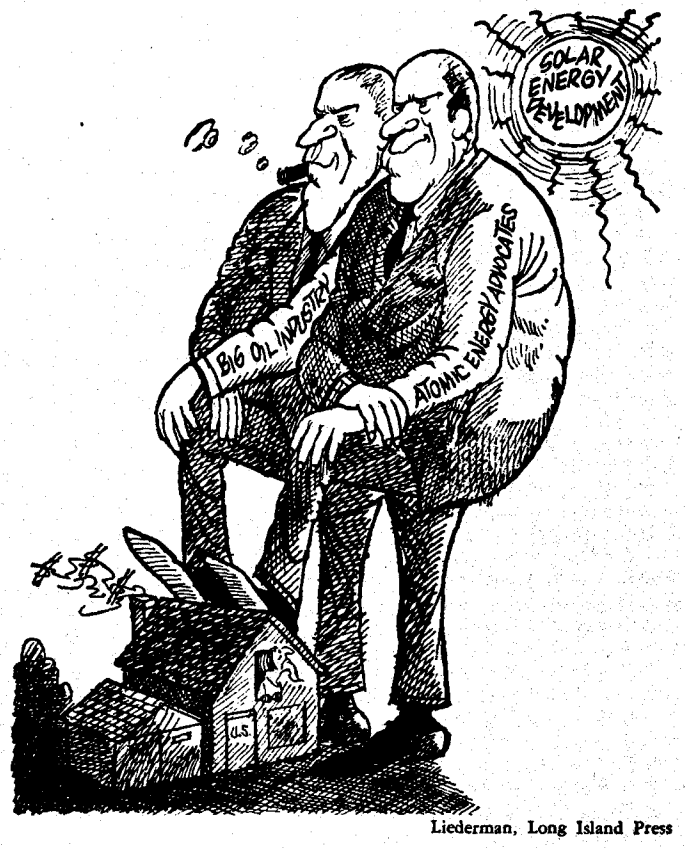
Nuclear Power, Alternatives to Nuclear Power, Economics of Nuclear Power, Fundraising Against Nuclear Power, Signature Gathering Techniques. And the conference was capped by a petition signed by Nader and a select group of distinguished scientists, including two Nobel Laureates —Dr. Hannes Alfven, the world-famous physicist from Sweden, and Dr. George Wald, the biologist from Harvard University—calling for a select Congressional committee to conduct a detailed probe of atomic power and its potential effect on the public health, safety and security.

Nader kicked off the conference by alleging that the need to safeguard radioactive materials associated with the nuclear process from the dangers of theft, sabotage, blackmail and leakage "is the most serious national security risk the country has ever faced"; and, that "the pursuit of nuclear power will turn the country into a garrison state." Dr. Alfven called the related problems of atomic power plants and the proliferation of nuclear weapons "a tremendous problem—the most terrifying thing in the world today." And Dr. John Gofman, a former research associate at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, now a professor of medical physics at the University of California, spoke for most of the anti-nuclear hosts when he said, "The essence of the problem is exceedingly simple—if we generate nuclear power to meet any significant proportion of our energy use, we create astronomical quantities of radioactive fission (waste) products and plutonium-239. Since no serious opponents or proponents of nuclear power contest the extreme toxicity of long-lived radioactive fission products and of plutonium-239, the problem becomes whether or not these substances can be perfectly isolated from the biological environment almost forever."

Gofman claimed that this would be impossible. He, along with Alfven and others, also warned that terrorists, criminal groups and non-nuclear nations could lay their hands on some of the tremendous amounts of plutonium produced by nuclear reactors, as a start to confronting the world with a rash of atom bombs. Later, as if in an attempt to feed the general high level of anxiety at the conference, members of a group called "The New York Public Interest Bargain Basement Plutonium Bomb Research Group" passed out a convincing step-by-step pamphlet on how to make a home-made plutonium bomb.

Also on the speakers' stand to speak out against the spread of nuclear power were anthropologist Margaret Mead; insurance gadfly Herbert Denenberg from Pennsylvania; Richard Hellman, an expert on government regulation of business, who charged that the "calculations" in support of the contention that atomic power plants are safe were "based on design, not on reality"; physicist Henry Kendall and economist Daniel Ford from the Union of Concerned Scientists; Dr. Barry Commoner, the biologist-environmentalist; Dr. Donald Geeseman, one of the nation's experts on plutonium; Dr. Thomas Cochran, a physicist representing the Natural Resources Defense Council; Leo Goodman, formerly of the Auto Workers union and one of the oldest active veterans of the anti-nuclear movement; and journalist I.F. Stone. Actor Robert Redford told the crowd he was there because he wanted to learn as much about the nuclear power controversy as he could. Dr. Ralph Lapp, physicist and writer, and



Liederman, Long Island Press

William O. Doub, a Washington lawyer and former member of the Atomic Energy Commission, were on hand to present the pro-nuclear platform.

The conference had the grim flavor and messianic fervor of the movement to end the war in Vietnam. So it was not surprising that David D. Comey, the environmental director of the Chicago-based Businessmen for the Public Interest, called "the drive toward nuclear power another domestic scandal on the same scale as the Vietnam war, which only a major social upheaval can stop." Talking to me in his Chicago office a week or two before the Washington anti-nuclear conference, Comey said: "Once the momentum of a federally supported program involving billions of dollars gets under way, it becomes a Leviathan, like the Vietnam war; it no longer answers to the helm, but takes over, and only a 'torpedo attack' can stop it." Comey's words seemed to echo those of Adm. Hyman Rickover, who once said: "By its nature, bureaucracy is unable to stop whatever it is doing except by drastic action applied from the outside."

Comey went on to tell me that "the 'best and the brightest' produced the atom bomb during World War II. After the war, a lot of people went into the nuclear power program with a great deal of optimism. They spent a lot of time and money trying to develop nuclear energy, but the more time and money they spent, the more problems they encountered—and these problems now appear to be endless; what has happened, then, is the 'best and the brightest' have given way to the 'dumb and the venal' who are trying to cram nuclear power down our throats. But when the American people wake up to this, as they did to Vietnam, they'll call a halt to it—particularly because nuclear power is unnecessary. We can use coal, for example, un-

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til other safe alternative sources of power, such as solar energy, are developed."

Dr. Chauncy Kepford, a chemist who has been spearheading an anti-nuclear movement in southeast Pennsylvania, summed up for the conference a rather widespread theory as to why there hasn't been much government support or industry interest in solar power—"the utilities" he said, "haven't been able to figure out a way to monopolize the sun." Kepford's quip apparently crystallized a feeling held by many of the anti-nuclear people who came to Washington, because I.F. Stone drew the longest, most enthusiastic round of applause when he warned that economic "monopoly is going to take over our democracy unless democracy reaches out to take over monopoly."

Senator Gravel, who was there for part of the conference, with Sen. William Proxmire (D., Wis.) and Reps. Teno Roncalio (D., Wyo.) and Benjamin Rosenthal (D., N.Y.), summed up the possible impact of the gathering by saying that "one important consequence of Ralph Nader's anti-nuclear conference will be recognition in Congress that grass-roots opposition to nuclear power has become a political force to be reckoned with."

Gravel went on to predict that there will be "some fireworks over nuclear power in the 94th Congress. For example, five county legislatures in New York State have passed resolutions against nuclear power plants; New York's Gov. Hugh Carey supports a moratorium; and in Atlantic City, N.J., citizens in the recent election voted against offshore nuclear power plants."

Gravel also noted that the Federal Energy Administration's September energy hearings in Chicago failed to attract any citizen or environmental groups to testify in behalf of nuclear power; and that the Task Force against Nuclear Pollution, which is coordinating a nationwide petition drive to get rid of nuclear power, reports that it has collected more than 115,000 signatures thus far.

From all this, it's apparent that the country's anti-nuclear sentiment might be on the verge of coagulating into a popular mass movement. □

LETTERS *(Continued from page 2)*

Evans-Novak function as ideologues whose political punditry is not based on scientific research. What astonishes us, however, is that a spokesman for Cambridge Survey Research would assert that Evans-Novak "do not pretend" to base their punditry on scientific research. As their columns plainly show, that *is* precisely what they do pretend to do. And as their columns also plainly show, they use Cambridge Survey Research to help them pretend to do precisely that. . . .

We assume that its organizers chose the name "Cambridge Survey Research" to indicate that it does scientific survey research. . . . Thus when Evans-Novak wrote that they "conducted" their interviews with a polling organization whose name gives off the aura of scientific research, their readers naturally were led to infer that their observations were based on scientific polling. We claimed that, in fact, Evans-Novak did not do scientific polling—a fact that Mr. Gorman admits while simultaneously trying to disavow any responsibility for any use Evans-Novak make of their explicit, public association with Cambridge Survey Research.

That dog won't hunt. Pollsters who permit ideologues to use their organization . . . must assume responsibility for the guilt they bear by that association. . . .

Lee Benson, Kevin Clancy, John Kushma

multiple choice

New York City

In their article "Pollsters and Pundits: The Tricks of the Trade" [*The Nation*, Nov. 30] Benson, Clancy and Kushma make the point that Gallup and other polls are based on "bivariate analysis"—the consideration of only two variables. This limited approach is, however, not restricted to pollsters but reflects a mode of thinking as old as Western civilization, a mode I call "bilateral consciousness"—in which only two alternatives are isolated, often from a wide range of options, and then treated as mutually exclusive, entailing the constant risk of choosing and acting on false alternatives.

Freud appears to have regarded this tendency as a given, which led him to say that "all thinking is dichotomous." It is high time that people be educated away from such "thinking"—and made more aware of the *multilateral* character of reality. . . .

Alan Bahr

who lives in Oregon?

Springfield, Ore.

Ralph Friedman's "Oregon: A Victory of Sorts" [*The Nation*, Nov. 30] is not an astute analysis of Oregon's political heartbeat. It misses the point of who the people are who live here. . . .

An Oregonian is the fisherman smoking grass with his long-haired crew while denouncing "hippies." An Oregonian is a Republican Governor who sets up a rock festival at the opposite end of Portland from the National American Legion Convention. Oregon is a small-town coastal community voting out its school board and rehiring a good teacher the board had fired for living with a woman to whom he was not married. An Oregonian is the Republican-Democratic Senator who voted against Tonkin Gulf.

Friedman in his death knell for the two-party system in Oregon is probably about 100 years late.

Tom Hanlon

a place in the sun

Uniondale, N.Y.

Your editorial, "The Olive Branch and the Gun" [Nov. 30] hardly does justice to the problem of Palestine. As you correctly state, "What is needed in the Middle East is less rhetoric and a demonstrated willingness on both sides to explore options in good faith." But what does your editorial offer beyond this platitude?

The problem of Palestine and the whole Middle East *is* the Palestinians. Until that fact is understood, and a place is made for them to build a nation adjacent to Israel, turmoil will exist. Unfortunately, most Israelis and many Westerners have chosen to ignore this reality, to everyone's grief. What is now needed is less lambasting of Arafat's puffery about a democratic secular state (which should be recognized for what it is—a bargaining chip) and greater pressure on Israel to cooperate in the establishment of an Arab Palestine. While this will mean relinquishment of all conquered territory after the 1967 war, it appears to be the only livable, long-term solution. Toward this end, some American arm-twisting might be helpful to move Israeli "stonewallers" to a position of negotiation with the PLO.

Let me conclude with a platitude of my own. Only a just peace will permit the long-run survival of Israel—and of the other people of the Middle East.

Martin Melkonian

correction

An editorial—"New England's Better Vision" by Myron W. Levin—[*The Nation*, Nov. 23] stated that the New England Energy Co. had chosen Kennebunk, Me., as the site for a large new refinery. In fact, the site chosen was in the neighboring town of Sanford. The error was made in editing.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Poetry of One World

GRACE SCHULMAN

By its very nature, art resists segregation on grounds of theme, race or nation: If there are common characteristics in the poetry written by women, or by ghetto residents, there are far more traits that are shared by poets of civilizations that are set apart by miles or centuries. For example, the device of communal storytelling has informed the songs of many groups we call primitive. And Willard Trask, who has translated girls' dance songs of 13th-century Portugal, has told me that their stanza forms resemble those of Chinese poems composed 1,900 years earlier.

Since around 1925, there has been a growing recognition that poetic styles and trends ignore the divisions between countries, eras and even life and death. The Surrealist writers of the 1920s discovered close bonds between nations when they emphasized the unconscious in the poetic process. And there is a universality in the increasing bareness of utterance in poetry of many nations in the last fifty years.

Translation is, like art itself, an equalizer of nations and ages, revealing unity. In *Seven Voices,* by Rita Guibert, the Mexican poet Octavio Paz is quoted as saying, "in writing an original poem we are translating the world, transmuting it. Everything we do is translation, and all translations are in a way creations. . . . Modern literature is one, despite the plurality of languages and traditions. . . . A writer is always a plurality of voices, every language is a plurality of languages."

The Nation's earlier poetry-in-translation issues contained poems by known writers of other countries, such as Mandelstam, in versions by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin, and Anna Akhmatova, translated by Stanley Kunitz. Also, there were poems of writers that are heard less frequently, in languages that are understood by fewer people of the Western world. There were Turkish poems by Ariburnu and Daglarca, translated by Talat Sait Halman; Eskimo poems by Stephen Berg, based on the translations collected by Knud Rasmussen; Slovene poems by Tomaz Salamun, translated by the author and Anselm Hollo, and *Ca Dao,* folk lyrics of Vietnam, collected and translated by John Balaban. Those songs, collected since then as *Vietnamese Lyric Poetry,* are based on an oral tradition that is at least 1,000 years old. In them, one line conveys the unifying power of poetry: "Men of one country must show love for each other."

If all art has the power of leaping across frontiers, the act of translation is a concrete way of transmuting the world, living, like art, on a fathomless level of consciousness. That transcendence is found in the poetry of Natalya Gorbanevskaya, a young woman who was arrested in Moscow for protesting as a civil rights activist. The ten poems appearing in this issue form a sequence entitled "Sun is for Summer, Winter for Frost." In those new poems, which have never been published in English or in Russian, Natalya Gorbanevskaya goes beyond political suffering to write of psychic realities. Because of the accuracy and musical rightness of Ronald Walter's translations, her agony becomes our agony, her despair our despair.

The versions of ancient Chinese poems by George Margulies, a Sino-Russian scholar, and Willard Trask, body forth the immediacy of the consciousness of a remote culture. And in the third group of poems in this issue, composed by the late Juan Soto Galán, their translator recreates their range of bitterness, irony and fierce praise.

Translation demands scholarship, intuitive understanding and empathy. What the versions and essays here have in common is the knowledge that translation discloses: the artist's grasp of the secrets of the universe, such as the miracle of unity, the dizzying truth that we are all one people. □

Ten Poems by Natalya Gorbanevskaya

Translated from the Russian by RONALD WALTER

Translator's Note: Natalya Gorbanevskaya, 38, one of the Soviet Union's leading poets, writes of love and despair, hope and desolation. Although few of her poems have appeared in official Soviet journals, at least five collections have been widely circulated through *samizdat,* the Soviet underground press. Those have been published in Russian, and some have been translated into English: one of the translated versions is *Selected Poems by Natalya Gorbanevskaya,* edited by Daniel Weissbort (London: Carcanet Press, 1972).

Wind-driven nighttime grass,
press blade to blade and stem to stem,
above the steppe the veil of winter's portent
glows like a vision of Pokrov.

The star's dawn hangs in a noose,
the trees are blood-red,
but as before the morning dew is just,
and Earth's iconic face joins the sky.

But the white smoke clouding the horizon,
spawn of the dried-out marsh,
what sorrow does it still presage—
the death of love, the devastation of the city,
or will it wipe from the road dust
the slight trace, forever?

August 14, 1973

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But what is on this dark floor,
where even the lift is afraid to linger,
what is behind this door, in the depths, in the soul,
where even patches of light stay up all night,

where nighttime silence and anguish
ooze drop by drop,
where fine wire cuts
when you almost touch the threshold of the stars,

where dodder clings to the wall,
cold and damp to the touch,
and straw-colored lashes I cannot see,
and your voice will not penetrate. . . .
The landing is empty, like a city square,
like a square in a dream that never ends.

August 16, 1972

I can't swim out, I can't make it to the shore.
On the clouds, as in reality,
the gulls let their cries fall to the Neva,
and this blue-gray gasp,
and these droplets of lead,
where there is neither death nor end,
where they aim at poor hearts,
but don't touch them.

When the high dew
raises sadness to the skies,
when a half-hour remains
to the gates of the sun,
on the slimy cold bottom,
in the green viscous depth
a funnel was drilled into me
by the steep-walled whirlpool.

I knew that it couldn't be,
that I am not as nimble as you,
that I couldn't swim out, couldn't reach the shore,
I told you!
But like a lifeless clod
you nodded your head,
and I briefly came out above the Neva,
and I stayed there.

Facile swimmers make it to the surface,
easy fishermen of love,
they skim the foam off the waves,
as you'd shear wool from a sheep.
In the last pitiful nakedness,
not on the cross, not on a nail,
half in sand, half in water—
whose gaze has died out forever.

September 2, 1972

Who throws a rope
in the abyss of the well?
An orphaned bird
is caught on the windlass.
A stone will pierce a funnel,
the rings will last long,
and the sun will be reflected,
cold, like an executioner's block.

Dug out with a stylus
in a copper plate,
printed
in a hundred copies
everything that you wailed,
lying in the sand,
all your sadness,
your whole moan—

and the quiet pause
between two
silences . . .
And the sailboat
looks at me
as it casts off.

January 5-6, 1973

On the eternal stage,
on the stage of the century,
the lights don't go out.
Two people,
four shadows,
we are not alone.

The backstage coldness,
the alien draught,
makes one shiver,
and the world is split,
naked, disjointed,
resembling nothing.

It's useless to press
palm to palm,
the emptiness is dense.
In the lap of death
it is born,
the life that is called beautiful.

December 25-28, 1972

(To T. Borisova)

What's that murmuring?
It's the highway longing for me.

What's that rustling?
It's the wind shaking the aspen.

It's the waves of the bay
whispering in Apshutsiems.

It's the sky over the Baltic
waiting for my eyes,
for my tears to mix with rain.

January 5-6, 1973

My Moscow, my wax tablet,
poetry walks in the first light snow.
My pain, which I don't hide,
but won't press against my pale temple.

And watermarks show through,
and the sheet of paper dries from tears,
and not a night goes by
that trainloads of prisoners don't leave
from Kazan station to the East.

January 6, 1973

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Always of love, only of love
the mindless nightingales warble.
Catch, catch the penetrating trills!
In April the penultimate blizzard
made a bed for me on all the winds,
and down and feathers, as in a pogrom, were flying.

But the grass has already risen to the nightingales,
and words have fallen between us
like the notorious and double-edged,
that fabled and that real sword,
and not in the grass, but in the earth I must lie.
But the summer meadow—isn't it too motley

a dress for those who quietly seek the grave?
Isn't the summer thunder too loud,
and the funeral march can't be heard for it.
And the thirst to live is more terrible than other passions,
and the nightingale, struck in the throat,
from now on will sing not only of love.

January 10, 1973

We change from day to day
and, stepping back from ourselves,
we timidly wipe the mirrors,
and touching the glass frame
we catch departing features . . .
Only you are changeless, betrayal.

Only you, astounding serpent,
in those eternal twists of the branches,
coil with crumpled fang,
and there rises behind your shoulder
a fiery angel, an angel with a sword,
with a machine gun.

January 12, 1973

Sleep is a dreamy, viscous river,
where in the water plants the oars are not light and not resonant,
it is a page's hand on the breast of the queen-imposter.

It is—when he is weightless,
elusive, inaccessible,
but your feet are poured with lead
and your path, like a dream, is tangled.

And having become muddled, you don't know if you've lost your way
or simply gotten entangled with someone,
who, though wanting to save you,
loses the tempo

and the dreams don't fit together,
and the vaulted ceilings don't coincide,
and it hangs like an open drawbridge—
the meaningless shroud of lonely freedom.

January 16-17, 1973

The Blessed Word

SELECTED POEMS OF OSIP MANDELSTAM. *Translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin. Atheneum Publishers. 128 pp. $6.25.*

MANDELSTAM. *By Clarence Brown. Cambridge University Press. 320 pp. $13.95.*

GEORGE M. YOUNG, Jr.

Mandelstam, who in his own country and time was crushed by, among other things, the dead weight of rhetoric, hardly has need of the added burden of superlatives that well-wishers in our country have already begun to heap upon him. Such phrases as "the greatest modern Russian poet," "the Pushkin of the 20th century," and such contentions as Joseph Brodsky's, that Mandelstam is not only the greatest Russian poet of the century but the greatest prose writer as well (too bad, you Biely, Pasternak, Nabokov and Solzhenitsyn people), are made with the best intentions, but reduce Russian poetry to some kind of American championship. Poets and poetry are already among the things most easily forgotten in the battle on a thousand battlegrounds to decide who is number one.

One can say with some truth that Pushkin is the dominant figure in 19th-century Russian poetry. But in this century Russia has been blessed with a number of supreme poets, each of whom, on his best days, was probably as much "the greatest modern Russian poet" as Mandelstam. Blok, Pasternak, Mayakovsky, Akhmatova, Tsvetaeva, Esenin, Khlebnikov and Mandelstam together created a body of poetry in Russian that is as varied and as magnificent as that created by Pound, Eliot, Stevens, Williams, Frost, Crane, Yeats and Thomas in English. Each of these great modern Russian poets is so good at what he does best that each has no genuine rivals. They should not be viewed as competitors for some mythical title but together should be accorded the paradoxical equality of nonpareils.

Mandelstam's greatness has to do with his exalted, almost religious devotion to poetry in the sense of the Greek *poieîn*, "making." Entering Russian poetry just as it was reaching a vatic extreme, just when poetry as "seeing" was exhausting itself, Mandelstam and the Acmeists renewed the idea of the integrity of craft.

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When it needed to be done, Mandelstam took Salieri's side in the dialectic set up by Pushkin in *Mozart and Salieri* between art as pure inspiration and art as pure craftsmanship. But for Mandelstam, poetry was always much more than perfect technique. The value he put on the integrity of the Word may at first have seemed a literary matter, a point of difference between him and certain of the Symbolists. But as his biography and his later poetry show, Mandelstam came to consider the integrity of the Word a matter of life and death. To write true words at a time when one's native language is being rapidly and intentionally transformed into a verbal system for the propagation of useful lies and self-serving half-truths requires more than a mastery of verse technique. At such times the maker of true words must pit all the strength he has gained from devotion to craft, all his mastery, all his verbal power, and even the life that supports and houses that power, against the verbal miscreations of his age. In a great poem, "The Age," written in 1923 (No. 135), Mandelstam lets us see the necessity and the impossibility of the artist's task.

My age, my beast—who will be able
to look into your eyes
who will glue together with his blood
two centuries' vertebrae?
Blood the builder gushes
through the throat from earthly things,
the hanger-on is only trembling
on the sill of future days.

Blood the builder gushes
through the throat from earthly things
and like a burning fish it throws
warm sea-cartilage on the shore
and out of the high bird-net,
from the damp blocks of azure,
pours, pours indifferently
onto your mortal wound.

To liberate the captive age,
to make a start at the new world
the passages of knotted days
must be connected by a flute.
That's the age that rocks the wave
with human melancholy
and in the grass the adder breathes
to the age's golden measure.

And the buds will go on swelling
and the sprint of green will burst,
but your backbone has been shattered,
my beautiful, pitiful age.
Cruel and weak, you'll look back
smiling senselessly
like an animal that used to be supple
on the tracks of your own paws.

Translated by Clarence Brown

To try to paraphrase this poem would be like trying to represent a sound-and-light show by drawing pencil lines on paper. But a number of ideas seem to be joined in the image of blood. Blood is what builds. It is also what one must sacrifice if he is to build. Blood is at once the stuff of art, the cost of art, and the hope of the age. The relationship between art, life and the age is tragic. The poet feels a responsibility for his age, but knows that to bind the age's broken spine he must sacrifice himself and offer his flute as a backbone. Blood is already flowing everywhere to no avail. To stand and watch the beast's pain is painful for the man. But must a man give up his own life and the instrument of his art to heal and free a caged beast? The tragedy is that the poet wants to answer both yes and no.

Many of Mandelstam's early poems are celebrations or meditations on things superbly made: Hagia Sophia, Notre Dame, lines from Homer. Even nature often seems to him at its best when it is like something made beautiful by man: the season that is "drawn-out, like the verse of Homer," or the day that "yawns like a caesura" (No. 62, 1914). The St. Petersburg Admiralty is to be admired as:

An aerial ship and a touch-me-not mast,
a yardstick for Peter's successors, teaching
that beauty is no demi-god's whim,
it's the plain carpenter's fierce rule-of-eye.

(No. 48, 1913)
Translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin

In his last years, Mandelstam continued to write about art's power and the poet's task, not to transform nature now, but to prevent the total destruction of truth.

The people need poetry that will be their own secret
to keep them awake forever,

Two Ancient Chinese Poems

Translated by GEORGE MARGULIES and WILLARD TRASK

A TRAVELER'S WIFE

He has gone, he is always gone,
All our lives we are apart.
My husband has gone thousands of leagues away,
We are at opposite ends of the earth.

The roads are long and hard,
Who knows if we shall ever meet again?
Where he is, the horses sniff the north wind,
Here, southern birds shelter in the woods.

He has been gone so long!
Day by day my dresses grow looser.
My beautiful sun is hidden under clouds,
He who is far cannot think of coming back.

Think that old age lies in wait for us all,
That months and years all hasten to their end!
But what good speaking? It is useless.
And I go back to my kitchen work.

Mei Sheng (1st century B.C.)

I THINK HOW YOU WERE IN OTHER DAYS

In other days you were with me
Like form and shadow, bound together;
Now you are with me
Like clouds drifting away and rain ended.

In other days you were with me
Like sound and echo, always in accord;
Now you are with me
Like fallen leaves dropped from the branch.

In other days you were with me
Like gold or stone, unflawed, unstained;
Now you are with me
Like stars put out or glory gone.

Fu Hsiuan (4th century A.D.)

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and bathe them in the bright-haired wave
of its breathing.

(No. 355, 1937)
Translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin

One of the ideas that runs through Mandelstam's work, both his poetry and prose, is that true words are the most difficult to write. To make true words a poet must be willing to sacrifice his life. But once written, true words are indestructible. They can be buried in the ground for centuries and still be fresh when they are again unearthed. In one of his most famous poems, he writes:

We shall meet again, in Petersburg,
as though we had buried the sun there,
and then we shall pronounce for the first time
the blessed word with no meaning.

(No. 118, 1920)
Translated by Clarence Brown and W.S. Merwin

In 1920 Petersburg had already become Petrograd—but it is in Petersburg, the city as it was before, that "we shall meet again." Clarence Brown intuits that the sun buried there is Pushkin, and that it is in the night "multitudinously alive with the spirit of Pushkin" that the poet will speak the blessed word that stands for nothing but itself.

But a great poet needs a great reader. The poem remains buried when it is in the hands of a poor reader—perhaps some pieces of it stick out. But in the hands of a great reader the poem completes itself and returns to life even as it brings life to the reader. Mandelstam himself was a great reader of Dante, Villon, Batyushkov and Pushkin. He considered them living companions in whose company he himself experienced life more keenly.

Clarence Brown is precisely the kind of reader that Mandelstam's poems need and deserve. He has spent years in the company of Mandelstam's poems and has devoted a good part of his life to efforts to introduce Mandelstam to Americans. Almost fifteen years of study and thought and writing have gone into his small book. It is, I think, one of the best books ever written about a Russian poet. Mandelstam is a formidable subject for any writer. His ideas are complex, his poems are difficult, his allusions can seem quite esoteric—he demands a reader whose erudition is enormous and whose intuitive powers are well developed. One can puzzle over some of Mandelstam's poems for years, admiring the sound, impressed by the imagery—and still have no idea what the poems are about. Here Brown is a great help. Without oversimplifying, he lets the readers see what is going on in the poem. Brown never tries to shift the spotlight from the poem to his own interpretation of it; the focus is always where it should be. He is extraordinarily sensitive to Mandelstam's subtlest hints, without carrying us off on wild tangents. Believing that Mandelstam's life and writings cannot be understood when considered apart from each other, Brown does a superb job of integrating biography and criticism. His prose is always readable, and sometimes even more than that. The book is refreshingly free of academic jargon and of the clichés of literary criticism.

During the years he was writing the book, Brown prepared "worksheets" on each poem: literal translations, variant meanings of ambiguous words, all the nuances and hints that could be found in each line, and charts on prosody and sound patterns. When he and W.S. Merwin decided to collaborate on the *Selected Poems*, Brown turned the worksheets over to Merwin, who then undertook the formidable task of turning their materials into English poems that would neither violate the sense of the originals nor compromise his own sense of how poems should be written now in English.

Much in these translations deserves comment. Merwin's English is clean, fresh, underplayed, never rhetorical or trite. One small complaint might be that he sometimes twists his diction to avoid a phrase that might seem trite. Generally, Merwin's translations give us excellent English versions of Mandelstam's images and direct statements, and give us a good approximation of Mandelstam's tone. What they do not give us—perhaps no translations can—is Mandelstam's *sound*. A reader who has become familiar with that sound will not mistake another for it. It is deep, rich, resonant, as of some grand, medieval ceremony. Stanley Kunitz, in the two Mandelstam poems he includes in his book *The Testing Tree*, comes closer, in my opinion, than Merwin to an English equivalent of Mandelstam's sound. (Readers interested in other attempts to translate Mandelstam's sound as well as his images and ideas can find several versions done by E.G. Fogel, in *Granite*, issues Nos. 1 and 5, as well as two by this reviewer.) Purists have attacked Merwin for ignoring the metrics and rhyme schemes of the originals. That is unfair. It is true that one of Mandelstam's greatest achievements was to be, at the same time, both innovative and traditional. But that is true of much Russian poetry. The strength of contemporary American poetry is not that of the Russian poetry, or even the American poetry written earlier in this century. Merwin's translations do not give us the whole of Mandelstam, but they do give us those parts of him that can be superbly done in the poetic idiom of the present day; they do not try to give us those parts of Mandelstam that might have been done better—or might still be done—by poets of another day. The most important thing, it seems to me, is that read together the Brown-Merwin book of translations and Brown's book of commentary at last offer readers of English clear access to a poet whose blessed words—legacy of a tortured life—now seem as permanent and as indispensable as anything made anywhere by the supreme artistry that Mandelstam adored and lived for. □

Rehumanization of Art

THE OWL'S INSOMNIA. *By Rafael Alberti. (Poems selected and translated by Mark Strand.) Atheneum Publishers. 141 pp. $4.95.*

J.M. ALONSO

Mark Strand, a fine poet who is truly intimate with Spanish literature, has picked these fifty poems out of a corpus of maybe thousands to make what he calls "the essential Alberti" accessible to American readers. His task is a considerable one.

Rafael Alberti, still writing at 71 and now exiled in Italy, belongs to the so-called "generation of '27." This was the spectacularly talented group of Spanish poets which was to be decimated and scattered over the world by the Spanish Civil War. García Lorca's name is the best known here, not only for his accomplishments but also because of the political publicity surrounding his violent death. Alberti, however, ranks with García Lorca and Jorge Guillén as one of the group's three principal luminaries. What makes Strand's effort particularly interesting, I think, is that with Alberti he has attempted to make accessible to us not only an important modern poet but the one figure out of that group which—for all their considerable differences—might fairly be called their representative man.

Unlike no other group I can think of,

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Poems by Juan Soto Galan

Translated from the Spanish by EMILE CAPOUYA

NEXT CASE

Juan Soto—I'll be frank—your case
Is without interest, your case
Is, as the lawyers say, de minimis
(Ask any lawyer). And I
Am starting to begin to find
You and it what the French call de trop
(In Castilian, I'd rather have your room
Than your company—pithy language, French.)

Because: Surely you've heard in your travels
That what goes up must come down?
(You'll notice that I choose my words so as to be
Comprehensible to the meanest understanding.)
And the bucket that comes up full goes down empty?
And kissing goes by favor and isn't an Award of Merit?
And finally, that politeness costs nothing
And you never can tell?

So: How come you didn't light more candles while
Everything was jake, and that girl
Was up and down you like a Capetown whore?

LA MALQUERIDA

(*After Rilke*: Einmal, wenn ich dich verlier. . . .)

Never, now I've lost you,
Shall your limbs resolve in sleep
Without a rustling upon them
Like linden leaves on linden boughs

Without a fluttering as of eyelids
Stirred by your warm breath, stirred
By the tremor of your throat,
The buoyant pulse of your exulting heart

Nor a soughing at your brow
Of airs blown from far meadows,
Airs that swayed in spring the starflower,
The rose mallow in high summer.

MONTARAZA DE MIS MONTES

In my country, heart's country,
They're burning the fallows,
The herdsmen are leaving for farthest Land's End.
The herdsmen are leaving, the girls are all weeping—
And that picture-postcard's a world of salt water away.

My girl's a peasant,
She counts on her fingers,
She wept two nights running, then turned off the tap.
My watch below I spend like the mad Irishman,
"Rhyming to flatter
Beauty's ignorant ear."

OF HELEN'S KINSHIP

Why is it no reproach that Helen undoes
Two husbands, a luckless city?
Why does the heart swell at the thought of her?
When she is still a girl the power takes her,
When she is woman grown it takes the world.

All talent is kin. What she cannot help,
The naked knife of her glance—
Leapt from the sheath to the hand, from the hand to the mark—
Is like the careless way I turn a splice,
Better than any rigger's loft ashore,
Or read the ship hull-down on the horizon
And tell my wondering mates her name and port.

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it seemed to be made up entirely of exuberant virtuosos. None seemed more of one than Alberti, even when it came to displaying facility with both the learned baroque modes and the oral popular traditions which Alberti and García Lorca managed to revive so brilliantly and turn into a valid modern idiom. Like Alberti, they all took to their craft with a kind of Adamic ebullience, as if poetry had just been invented, or at least rediscovered—to the irritation of their elders. They took to experimenting with images, metaphors (especially metaphors), levels of diction, subjects, even entire traditions, often, it seemed, just for the pleasure of making them stand on edge, to be played with most untraditionally. The result was that they were accused of cold intellectualism and mere mannerist professionalism, just as Dali and Buñuel, who were also part of their group, would be. The charge was not true of the poets, to be sure. Not even of Guillén, who unlike Alberti and García Lorca, continues to bear this accusation in the present literary histories, where the overheard has a way of becoming codified. Still, however untrue, they were criticized for it by such respected older poets as Antonio Machado and Juan Ramón Jiménez, and it was specifically in terms of Alberti that both Machado and Jiménez voiced their general complaints about the whole lot of them.

Machado, though on the board of judges that gave Alberti his first important prize, was nevertheless moved to observe that he found the young poets much too intellectual in their approach and not sufficiently rooted in the affective and intuitive. As for Jiménez, who went from being in some sort their mentor to a position of open hostility, after personally encouraging Alberti for so long, he declared that Alberti's rapid cinematic, often truncated images, and his dislocated if not totally shattered syntax for the sake of expression (remarkably well handled by Strand), had produced what amounted to babble in *Cal y canto*. Furthermore, he believed it was a waste of Alberti's time.

Machado, of course, could hardly be expected to sympathize, especially after having struggled so hard and so successfully to achieve apparent simplicity against the pedantic Góngorist ornateness that had long been the curse of Spanish poetry. These young poets, after all, were actively engaged in a revival of Góngora, of all poets. And Jiménez, a Symbolist dedicated to the pursuit of beauty, also could not be expected to look favorably on, say, the anti-poetic, Chaplinesque modernity which the tormented Alberti displayed, particularly when dealing with the ugly. But ugliness, which Jiménez saw as reductive of poetry, was for Alberti something which had entered modern poetry both triumphantly and necessarily with Baudelaire's *Flowers of Evil*.

However, it was their contemporary, Ortega y Gasset, who would do most to brand them with their negatively intellectualist reputation—one which was hardly dispelled, by the way, when the great majority landed in exile (though not Alberti) as professors in some of the world's best universities. Ortega, in his well-known *The Dehumanization of Art*, was in fact reacting directly to these poets. And, seeing their technological zeal and joy at "experimentation" as sport, made his now famous response to modern art in general with what would prove to be a brilliant insensitivity to what they were really about.

It was true that these poets approached their craft making a generational banner of Góngora, the lucid professional and supreme technician. It was also true that even when they turned away from the highly literary modes and had recourse to oral, popular poetry (García Lorca and Alberti being the most successful at this), they did so from a proudly erudite perspective. But their reliance on their intellect notwithstanding, what these

THE ARRIVAL
(Translated from the Spanish by Donald D. Walsh)

We get off the plane and we go, Nicaraguans and foreigners,
all mixed together toward the huge building all lit up—first stop
Immigration and Customs—and as we approach, passports in hand,
I think of how proud I am to be holding
the passport of my socialist country, and of my satisfaction
in arriving in a Socialist Nicaragua. "Comrade"
they will say to me—a revolutionary comrade welcomed
by the revolutionary comrades of Immigration and Customs—
not that there aren't any controls; there ought to be controls
so that capitalism and Somozaism never come back—
and the emotion of coming back to my country in revolution
with more changes, I hear of more and more decrees
of expropriation, changes more and more radical,
many surprises in the short time one has been away
and I see joy in the eyes of everyone—those that have stayed,
the others have already gone—and now we go into the brightness
and they ask nationals and foreigners for their passports . . .
but it was all a dream and I am in Somoza's Nicaragua
and they take my passport from me with the icy courtesy
with which Security would say to me: "Do come in"
and they take it inside and they don't bring it back (they surely
must surely be telephoning to Security
to the Presidential Palace or to somebody or other) and by now
all the passengers are gone and I don't know if they're going to arrest me
but no: at the end of an hour they come back with my passport,
the CIA probably knew that this time I didn't go to Cuba
and that I was just a single day in East Berlin
and so at last I can go through Customs
all alone in Customs with my old suitcase
and the kid that inspects just pretends to inspect
without inspecting anything and he murmurs to me: "Father"
and he doesn't dig down into the suitcase where he would find
the phonograph record with Allende's last appeal to the people
from the Palace, interrupted by the noise of bombs going off,
the record I bought in East Berlin, or Fidel's speech
about Allende's overthrow, the one that Sergio gave me,
and the kid says: "It's eight o'clock already and we haven't eaten,
we Customs workers get hungry, too"
"What time do you have supper?" I asked "Not until after the last plane lands"
and now I am moving towards the dark demolished city
where everything is just the same and nothing happens but I have seen
his eyes and with his eyes he has said to me: "Comrade."

Ernesto Cardenal

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Two Poems by Julia de Burgos

Julia de Burgos was born in Puerto Rico in 1917, and died in New York in 1953. Her work, which has been published in her country, is not widely known here.

Translated from the Spanish by GRACE SCHULMAN

POEM TO MY DEATH

Confronting a longing
To die with my very self, abandoned and alone,
On the densest rock of a deserted island.
At that moment, a final yearning for carnations,
On the landscape, a tragic horizon of stone.

My eyes filled with graves of stars,
My passion spread out, exhausted, dispersed,
My fingers like children watching a cloud fade,
My reason mobbed with enormous sheets.

My pale affections returning to silence
—Even love, consumed brother in my path!—
My name untangling, yellow in the branches,
And my hands, twitching to give me to the grass.

To rise to the final, the whole minute,
And to offer myself to the fields,
Then to bend the leaf of my ordinary flesh
And fall unsmiling, without witness to inertia.

Let nobody dishonor my death with sobs
Or wrap me forever in plain earth
For in a moment of freedom I may freely
Demand the one liberty of this planet.

With what mad joy will my bones begin
To seek airholes in my brown flesh
And I, giving myself, giving myself fiercely and boldly
To the elements: in solitude breaking my chains!

Who will detain me with useless dreams
When my soul begins to fulfill its task
Making of my sleep a rich dough
For the frail worm that knocks at my door?

Smaller and smaller my worn-out humility
At every instant greater and easier the surrender
Perhaps my chest will turn to begin a flower bud
Maybe my lips will feed lilies.

What shall I be called when all that remains
Is my memory of myself on the rock of the deserted island?
A carnation wedged between my shadow and the wind,
Death's child and mine: My name will be poet.

RIO GRANDE DE LOIZA

Río Grande de Loíza . . . Undulate into my spirit
And let my soul founder in your rivulets,
To seek the fountain that stole you as a child
And in mad haste returned you to the path.

Wind into my lips and let me drink you,
To feel you mine for a brief moment,
And hide you from the world in myself
And hear voices of fear in the mouth of the wind.

Come down for an instant from the spine of the earth,
And seek the intimate secret of my longing;
Confounded in the sweep of my bird fantasies,
Drop a water rose in my dreams.

Río Grande de Loíza! . . . My source, my river,
After the motherly petal raised me into the world
With you went down from the rough hills
To seek new furrows, my pale desires,
And all my childhood was like a poem in the river,
And a river was the poem of my first dreams.

Then came adolescence. Life surprised me
Fastening to the broadest part of your eternal voyage;
And I was yours a thousand times, and in a beautiful romance,
You woke my soul and kissed my body.

Where did you carry the waters that bathed
My form, in a spike of the newly open sun?

Who knows in what remote Mediterranean land
Some faun on the beach will possess me!

Who knows in what rainstorms of what far lands
I will be pouring to open new furrows;
Or if, perhaps, tired of biting hearts
I will be frozen in crystals of ice!

Río Grande de Loíza! . . . Blue. Dark. Red.
Blue mirror, fallen blue fragment of sky;
Nude white flesh that turns you black
Every time night goes to bed with you;
Red band of blood, when under the rain
The hills vomit torrents of mud.

Man river, but man with river purity
Because when you give your blue kiss you give your blue soul.

My dear Mister River. Man river. The only man
Who has kissed my soul when he kissed my body.

Río Grande de Loíza! . . . Great river. Great tear.
The greatest of all our island tears,
But for the tears that flow out of me
Through the eyes of my soul for my enslaved people.

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poets were actually engaged in, and most passionately, was something that should more fairly have been called a rehumanization of art.

Like Ortega, they too were inevitably existentialist. But what Ortega perceived as only a "superior form of algebra done with metaphors," that is, a display of pointless virtuosity, had not been a question of abstraction or of sport, after all. Quite the contrary, metaphors were for them the principal tool for expressing their in-the-world selves, and nothing was more serious. The quest for this expression had been what had led them to a rather phenomenological cult of the senses in preference to ideas, of the exploration of sensations rather than any form of psychologizing, and in the main they placed their faith in metaphors to achieve their goals. García Lorca, "the poet of the five senses," said it for them: metaphors should be based on the senses, the links to the world. Thus the strength of a poem depends on them. They are not adornments but rather the structure of poetry itself. With this approach, of course, came their technological frenzy and an often wildly disorienting use of synaesthesia. This apparently opened the way to infinite new varieties of metaphor, and should also explain why even the most mediocre among them could at least be dazzling. But it was this approach to metaphor, too, that permitted García Lorca and Alberti to mix what has a strong kinship to Surrealism with oral, medieval traditions and come out with a genuine, lively idiom that was and is absolutely modern in its expression, and legitimately so.

Like García Lorca, Alberti is a fish in water within the idiomatic ambit of popular poetry and in what is most alive in his contemporary language and its traditional presentations of reality. And, like García Lorca, he is very much a child of this century. It was not for nothing that he once said, describing himself, "I was, please respect me, born with the movies." Strand's selections and translations make Alberti accessible, presenting him to us as quite alive, and vibrantly so, in English. *The Owl's Insomnia* is therefore an exceptionally good piece of work. □

THEATRE / Harold Clurman

It is a sad circumstance that some of the masterworks of dramatic literature are produced on our stage by companies ill-equipped to do them justice. We have none of those well-established theatre organizations which most European countries possess where means and ends are artistically compatible. Audiences at such plays as Pirandello's *The Rules of the Game* or Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* in New York must make "allowances"—an unhappy state of mind for pleasure or enlightenment.

The Rules of the Game, which the New Phoenix Repertory Company put on for a brief run at the Helen Hayes Theatre, is not as "difficult" a play as his *Six Characters* or his *Henry IV*. The passion which is present in all Pirandello's work burns more palpably in the earlier play (written in 1918) than in the later ones. And the passion here is not intellectual but erotic, the passion of jealousy.

Pirandello was a Sicilian with the torrid nature which we associate with that island. His marital sorrows and, I imagine, a great amount of philosophical reading, which led him to speculate on appearance and reality, the lack of a clear focus in human consciousness and the consequent split in individual personality, congealed Pirandello's hot temperament so that it often appears icily cerebral. That is one reason his plays, both madly intense and strangely constricted, sometimes leave one puzzled, even frustrated, unless they are superbly projected.

They are constructed like mystery melodramas: neither realistic nor, with a few exceptions, overtly stylized. They are colorful and somehow stark; emotion is held in check but because there is at bottom so much of it, it creates a fierce tension through which a malicious irony spreads an uncanny sense of mystification.

The Rules of the Game is about a man so hurt by his wife's equivocal romanticism and infidelity that he seeks to protect himself from his pain by cultivating a frigid objectivity. To no avail. Beneath his cold calculation, he is consumed by a thirst for vengeance, a murderous plan to rid himself of his wife's lover, toward whom he always maintains a posture of sedulous politeness.

The Phoenix Company simply lacks the actors for such a play. Someone like a 40-year-old John Barrymore is needed, and all the Phoenix can provide is John McMartin, a character actor best in the impersonation of clowns, weaklings and dotards. Joan van Ark is nice and pretty in a role requiring the most bewitching and exasperating sensual allurement in a sinuous grand manner. So for all the company's good will, we do not really see this very interesting play.

Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* (Roundabout Theatre), from the master's late period (1886), is one of his most complex creations. When Duse undertook to act it she engaged Gordon Craig to design it. On seeing his setting—abstract and grandiose—she thought it alien to Ibsen's world of provincial domesticity. But perhaps Craig was closer to the play's spirit than she or anyone else at the time could have understood. *Rosmersholm* is a "confessional" play in which Ibsen dramatized his self-doubt, the essential fissure in his soul, the never quite resolved contradiction which underlay the course of his whole career.

The grim puritan in Ibsen yearned for a moral perfection which his inexorable conscience never permitted him to feel that he had attained. The anarchist in him was suspicious of all statehood and governments, but he insisted that he receive medals and decorations from them. He clamored for obedience to the precepts of an austere and absolute ethic, but he craved the warm indulgence of a pagan world. He believed in democracy but demanded that it be aristocratic. He gave himself unrelentingly to the discipline of artistic effort but was embittered by the tardy realization that it led to the sacrifice of his more fundamental need for personal love. The revolutionist in him began to doubt the premises of his ardor for progress and reform. This scrupulously determined realist came to aspire to an ineffable mysticism. He wished to construct monuments that might reach to the heavens and found that he had built no more than convenient dwelling places.

Ibsen wrought the Rebecca West of *Rosmersholm* out of his subconscious self. She is a woman of doubtful origin, ambitiously forging ahead with ruthless power to beat down reactionary prejudices, only to find herself through contact with the noble Rosmer guilty of baseness approximating crime, for she has desired him and helped drive his wife to suicide. Ibsen is also Rosmer become unsure of his mission as either pastor or political leader; he finds the first narrow and confining and is disqualified for the second by confused motivation. Neither Rebecca nor Rosmer can go on; they must die—a symbolic

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rather than a factual necessity. Ibsen accuses himself in this play of being, like all the people of the Rosmer line, too controlled to cry and too appalled by his own shortcomings to laugh.

To bring life to such involuted characters in an environment that is only ostensibly related to conventional naturalism is a task of utmost delicacy and difficulty—a formidable challenge to actors, director, designer. All that can be claimed for this performance is that it is earnestly and intelligently spoken, a sort of staged reading in a confined space.

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is now being given a sound production at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. The play, which as editor I included in an anthology of *Famous American Plays of the 1930s*, strikes me in retrospect as one of the best pieces of dramatic writing since our country's coming-of-age in the 1920s.

It is something more than a rugged tale of itinerant agricultural workers during the Great Depression. It is a sort of American "legend." There is a mythic simplicity about it. What emerges is not only a sense of the loneliness of American existence, the separation between persons, the lack of brotherhood, our incapacity to fructify our vast continent with the warm blood of fellow feeling, but an inference to the effect that until brawn and brain become one in our land we shall suffer the dumb ache of isolation, a perpetual state of partial being.

It may well be that Steinbeck did not think of his story in these terms, but that is nonetheless what he created. Its moral point lies in the telling. There is no artifice or "aesthetic" design in it; it is rather stark. The mood and meaning spring naturally from the authentic Americanism of the language, the spareness of the character delineation. Even those who do not get the play's "message" as conscious content must be touched by direct contact with the naked material. The play is modest in form and large in emotional implication.

James Earl Jones as Lennie and Kevin Conway as George are excellent and most of the others, particularly Stefan Gierasch as the old and disabled farm hand whose only companion is a decrepit dog, are also good. Jones does not play Lennie as the cretin he so often seems in most performances; he endows the man with a sort of primitive mystery resembling certain pieces of pre-Columbian sculpture. He stares out at the incomprehensible universe in blank wonderment, alive only to the realities of tactile connection, food and kindly care. Kevin Conway is perhaps a bit too energetically assertive, not himself sufficiently "lost" (in his own way George is as bereft of support as Lennie, and needs his animal-like fidelity).

And despite its general merit I found some lack of encompassing poetic mood in the production. I'm not sure I can ascertain the exact cause for this, but I shall set down some of my misgivings.

The actress who plays Curley's wife is miscast: she lacks the body and the unaware sensuality of the girl, a heavily brooding dreaminess within the vacant intelligence. The sadistic ferocity of Curley's impotence (a negative sensuality) is missing, and the pathos of the black man excluded because of his color from the company of the other hands fails to register because Jones, too, is black. There were other impediments to my total involvement: the use of soft music not only between scenes but at the fearful climax when George prepares to kill Lennie; petty "realistic" details—water splashing off stage, birds and animal sounds in the bushes—are all antithetical to the play's epic lineaments. The staging of Lennie's scene with Curley's wife seems to diminish its poignancy: they are seated too far apart; their inner apartness can be made evident only by physical proximity. There is something a little studied in the overall performances; they lack the organic simplicity I found in the actors of the Fugard plays [see *The Nation*, December 14, 1974].

Despite these reservations, *Of Mice and Men* is something assuredly worth seeing, a most honorable effort on everyone's part.

It is truly a holiday occasion when an actor like Raul Julia appears on the scene. He *communicates*. He has charm, imagination, good humor, zest, the courage of a clown, a perpetual sense of comedic opportunity. He brings all these qualities to his singing and dancing.

He is now appearing in a revival of *Where's Charley?* (Circle in the Square Theatre), the George Abbott and Frank Loesser musical produced in 1947 based on the perennial *Charley's Aunt* (1892). Deep thinkers in the theatre pooh-pooh this chestnut but I found it innocently diverting in its old-fashioned but still pleasant tunes, lyrics, dialogue. But if there were nothing more to the show than Raul Julia (supported by funny Tom Aldredge and an engaging company), I should still recommend it. □

MUSIC

DAVID HAMILTON

Historically, brass instruments alone have not been entrusted with music of high intellectual substance. In the 18th century, their relatively intractable sound—admirable for *al fresco* purposes and imposing, even awe-inspiring in large interior spaces—kept them out of the aristocratic chambers. Restricted to ceremonial and sacramental uses, and to exceptionally solemn moments in the theatre (most famously, the statue music in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*), they also gradually entered the orchestra, primarily

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as reserves for climaxes. But the intimate and subtle intricacies of chamber music could furnish them little employment, except for the horn's role as a somewhat problematic member of the wind quintet, a heavy-footed makeweight to four agile instruments of wood.

In the 19th century, the invention of valves gave trumpet and horn a technical facility whose new possibilities were rapidly exploited in orchestral music; indeed, the wide-ranging harmonic *ductus* of Wagner's later music could not have been so sonorously clothed without such a development. Still, not until recent years have the brass instruments been much used in smaller, refined contexts, and not so often or fruitfully that a conjunction of, say, Elliott Carter's fluidly detailed idiom with the timbres and resources of a brass quintet would have struck most listeners as a likely one.

Yet precisely this conjunction has come to pass: a Brass Quintet by Carter, unveiled locally by its dedicatees, the American Brass Quintet, under the auspices of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center on December 15. It is an exciting piece, not only in its convincing and engaging vitalization of the medium, but for its force and intricacy of argument—less intricate, for technical reasons, than Carter's recent works for more malleable or more multifarious groups (the Third String Quartet and the Concerto for Orchestra, respectively), but always dramatic and absorbing.

The ground plan, of short, overlapping and interweaving movements, is similar to that of the above-mentioned works, but here the constituent ensembles to which the "movements" are assigned do not remain fixed. Although each instrument has its core of unique materials, they are juxtaposed and recombined in duos and trios that alternate with material for the whole ensemble, which finally reconstitutes itself into a slow movement (of surprising harmonic richness) that had been previously, near the beginning, several times interrupted by a variety of more energetic matters. In fact, this long-range contrast between the ensemble's solemn, elegiac potential and its more raucous manifestations enables the work to embrace the entire range of brass's expressive capability. Suggestions of jazz textures that have always been structurally immanent in the free, quasi-improvisational conflicts of Carter's music are nearer the surface here in such passages as the driving, glissando-rich duet for two trombones (although any jazz-like use of mutes to generate a wide spectrum of colors is abjured).

Characteristically, the Brass Quintet isn't easy to play, but its difficulties, when mastered, offer the players a splendid springboard from which to convey their virtuosity to the audience; this is exhilarating for all concerned, a subtler form of the pleasure we take in such cruder institutions as the brass band. And when this mercurial procession of wit and bravado finally debouches into the slow final section, at once lush in texture and restrained in manner, the effect is breath-taking—as, indeed, was the playing of the American Brass Quintet, who will repeat the work on January 13 at Carnegie Hall. (A recording will be made shortly by Columbia.) □

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TELEVISION

PETER SOURIAN

In the past three years, following the great success of the Archie Bunker show, prime-time TV has become "bunkerized." The network vice presidents in charge of audience measurement have discovered gold in the hills of ethnic diversity. And it may seem to be a good thing, too—holding up a mirror to America in this regard. Let's be openly honest and let it all hang out. But there's bunkum in this bunkerism.

In more than fifty prime-time series this season, the heroes and heroines celebrate an almost obsessive ethnicity. NBC has a Puerto Rican garage mechanic, Nebraska settlers and an Italian lawyer from South Boston. ABC offers Alaskan Eskimos, a Chinese pacifist always up to his armpits in violence, and Minnesota Swedes beset by prejudice. On CBS are Hawaiian *wahines*, Protestant suburbanites who talk loudly, a rather repressed WASP psychotherapist and a planetful of apes who are painfully bigoted toward human beings. And especially, across the board, blacks are to be seen in amazing numbers.

A few years ago a black actor was mostly an unemployed actor. Now there are entire black shows, and the newer the show the less the actor seems obliged to play Amos or Andy. In one series, the black maid of a white household was such a successful draw that the producers had her quit in a huff so she could go star on her own show (*Good Times*), where she is no longer a maid but a housewife in her own right—just like white folks. There's also *Sanford and Son*. The difference between these two series is that the latter exploits ethnic flavor, whereas on *Good Times* the idea seems to be the opposite: blacks are just exactly like everyone else. I feel that the two attitudes produce much the same effect: whether too little flavoring or too much, the essence of the meat is lost.

I'm not saying there should be no ethnic shows. They may be a faltering first step in a right direction, toward an eventual serious sorting out of our attitudes, and this on networks abhorred by liberal intellectuals for their rank commercialism. This should be no surprise. Business sense, more concerned about profit than about race or creed, has throughout history had its moments as a liberalizing force, when the wind blew that way. In the 1930s, in a British mass-circulation weekly of the most racist and

Peter Sourian, a novelist, teaches English at Bard College.

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snobbish (lower-middle-class) sort, a Chinese character named Wun Lung became progressively humanized. George Orwell surmised that this reflected a growing editorial awareness that the magazine had developed a significant readership among Straits Chinese.

The great staple of TV entertainment is crime, and blacks show up on police forces even more frequently than they do in the general screen population. One of them, Christie Love, a sexy black policewoman, loyal as a Sultan's Janissary, outcops the stereotyped Irish cop. A skeptic might wonder if this trend isn't the result of enlightened self-interest on the part of the networks—a conspiratorial attempt to co-opt blacks in their evening fantasy lives and thus get them to shut up about the system during the day, since at night on TV they nearly seem to run it. Other oppressed minority cops sometimes seem to confirm this suspicion; for example, the Navajo on *Nakia* is forever neatly resolving conflicts between tribal and modern ways, in himself as well as in others. Furthermore, all of these ethnic types are official cops, i.e., they find themselves in situations where their behavior is safely ordained by the uniform they wear. But as soon as you have an old-time feisty private-eye rebel, acting alone and unfettered, not above breaking a little law in the interests of deeper justice and less-bland entertainment, he's apt to be a certified WASP. *The Rockford Files* stars James Garner, who'd been a convict for five years on a bum rap. I would be astonished to come upon a bad-ass, good-samaritan private eye modeled on someone like, say, one of the Chicago Black Panthers of the late 1960s.

Naturally, it *is* heartwarming to observe a young black and white police team in the same squad car on *The Rookies* becoming real partners after a bit of initial difficulty. Warm the heart, yes; TV will do that. What it is careful not to do is arouse anger over controversial issues.* Louis XVI was really much more tolerant of consequential controversy than are network heads, which in part is why he lost his.

Real controversy is absolutely out, but ersatz controversy is absolutely in, since viewers need to feel they may be about to see something fresh. What are we to make, for example, of the bigotry of Archie Bunker, head of the household of *All in the Family* for years now and still going strong? As a nation we still haven't figured that one out. We are clearly meant to laugh affectionately at Archie's bigoted remarks, and yet at the same time the program tells us to disapprove of bigotry in the abstract. Vice presidents in charge of audience measurement know that the Archie in us must continue to identify with him or he will almost immediately go off the air: the tyranny of capitalist democracy, or so the Marxist might say.

Partly because of TV, people in the mass these days get a much better education in some respects than their parents had. They may continue to be bigoted (the ethnic obsessiveness and "openness" may indeed indicate latent or repressed bigotry), but they now know what the word means, and that it has an unattractive connotation. As a result of such ready-to-wear sophistication, it is more difficult to uncover real attitudes.

One of the more heartening aspects of these shows is the acting. The old-style glamour hero seems much less in demand, and that gives work to able character actors. Also, actors working together on series develop an ensemble virtuosity seldom seen in American theatre for lack of solid repertory companies. Often in a series the artist who manages to make an original statement is the actor, who may do it more or less on the sly. In the case of Archie Bunker, Carroll O'Connor (who has indicated his distaste for the man he plays) gives enough edge to the portrayal for us to see, *if we wish*, how much Bunker really hates himself, confined in the prison of his attitudes.

*This goes for Public TV too, whose ethnic preoccupation seems to be the English, long ago and far away, except on prime-time Public TV, where they are constantly to be seen, introduced by Alistair Cooke (which is how you know you're about to see something cultural, even if it's just Lord Peter Wimsey), and "made possible through a grant from Exxon," which sounds commercial enough to me, especially these days.

One of the stronger shows is *Maude*, which may be why there's a rumor it may be about to go off the air. Maude, a suburban Protestant married for the fourth time, to a "well-known appliance dealer," is a knee-jerk liberal (perhaps that makes her fair game for tough satire) who once had an abortion, piously insisting it was because of her principled concern over overpopulation, until it became clear that she simply didn't want the child. On a recent segment, Maude's husband and their doctor neighbor find themselves momentarily in prison for speeding through a hick speed trap. Harassed by the jailer, they explain indignantly that they are not common criminals. Their cellmate, a down-and-out black, simply by watching them and making occasional remarks, manages to express a lot about ways in which our legal system discriminates among citizens. Yet he's a marginal figure, an Artful Dodger.

Still, Maude, who lies, is sometimes vicious and talks louder than anyone else on TV, is something of a real human being. One wonders if the comparative sophistication of the program is partly due to the fact that it's shown on a Monday night, which is almost not prime time. Also, it seems calculated to attract a fairly well-off audience, one perhaps more receptive to critical attitudes than other definable groups.

There may be another aspect of the ethnic obsession. As a people of widely varying backgrounds we may have gone from trying desperately to be just like Ozzie and Harriet to fearing that we've succeeded. The notion now is rather to celebrate heterogeneity and intensely to affirm individuality. Even the Burger-King ads on TV make much out of the fact that they expeditiously handle *your* special order—hold the tomato, extra pickle just for *you*, and so on. That may be precisely because people feel there's less and less scope for real individuality. A lot of the affirmation is merely rhetorical. NBC's *Petrocelli* takes petulant offense when his name is not pronounced correctly, whereupon we are meant to know that the guy who did this terrible thing to Petrocelli has *got* to be one of the bad guys. One prefers the tough detective in *Kojak* who may or may not be a Pole, but who seems sure enough of his individuality for the scriptwriter not to bother mentioning his ethnic background. Sometimes, of course, the ethnic business is real and gives just the right touch of flavor. A case in point is Mary Tyler Moore, one of the few distinctly WASP heroines who is not relegated by TV to some farm, where they milk cows for dramatic action and talk entirely in hortatory but safe homilies. □

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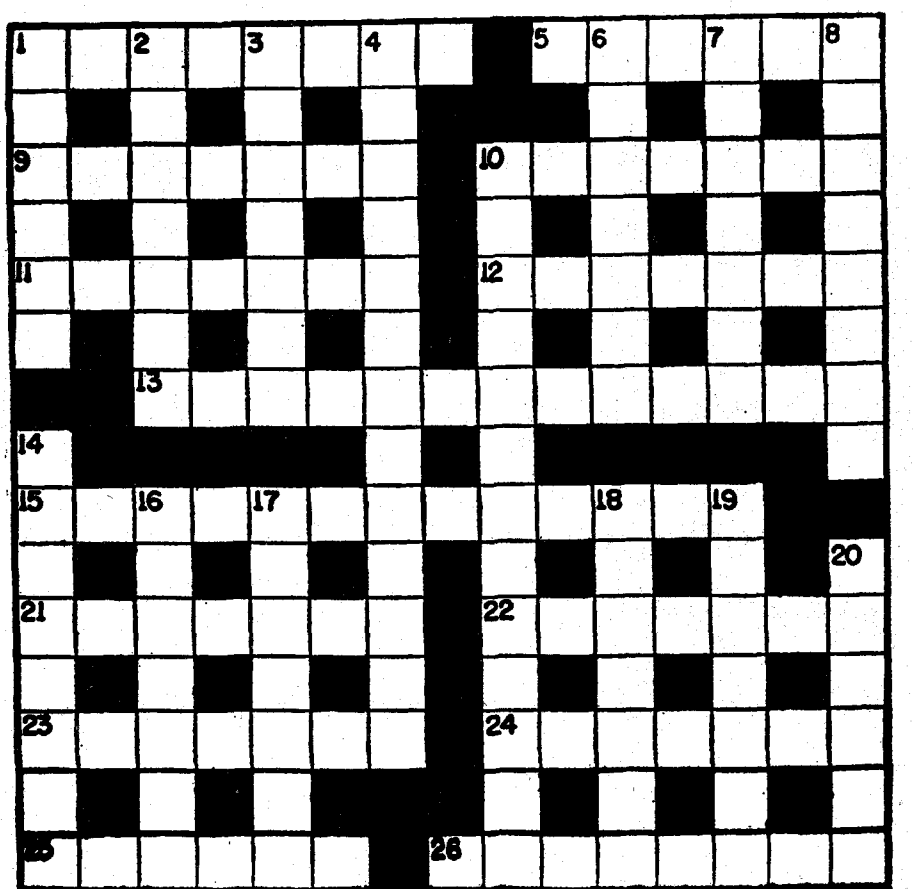

ACROSS

1 Copies a model of a splicer. (8)
5 Is a debt a bad arrangement, when cut down? (6)
9 Pipes made of birch, on display. (7)
10 Grand name for one of these as a water holder, though they're usually dry and sound like they work hard. (7)
11 Polynesia, Micronesia, Melanesia, etc. (7)
12 It's awkward to plead the cause of a future jumper! (7)
13 The sort of result he obtained, if you do act illegally? (5,3,5)
15 Not the telephone directory, though part of a real best seller! (4,2,7)
21 True, possibly. (7)
22 Is a C-plus a common thing for the anatomy student? (7)
23 It's demonstrable, but not self-evident. (7)
24 Hoped to get praised, perhaps. (7)
25 What the mocker does. (6)
26 Submission of the question if you do to refer! (It's tacked on.) (8)

DOWN

1 Make fun of good French material for the band? (6)
2 You could find more than one in the same tome as 15, but a little further on. (7)
3 Some people burn it, or at least burn one up. (7)
4 Leo reputedly crowned here. (6,7)
6 Such a cad would feel at home in Australia! (7)
7 Cloverleaf, for example. (7)
8 Speeds in, perhaps, just to deal out? (8)
10 Is it worse to water down the ketchup? You'll get by if you can! (3,3,7)
14 Lying down with a pipe inside—really getting carried away! (8)
16 The elections of 1974. (3-4)
17 Ham and eggs may be so arranged. (7)
18 As an anagram, 24 is one. (7)
19 Having the good points of a cowboy? (7)
20 How Daisy was scheduled to travel. (6)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1566

ACROSS: 1 and 23 down Sleeping Beauty; 5 Clammy; 10 Tornado; 11 and 29 Silence in Court; 12 Olden; 13 Dedicated; 14 Naomi; 16 Yes and no; 19 Stiffens; 22 Music; 24 Exercises; 26 Ruche; 28 Utopian; 30 Yankee; 31 Depleted. DOWN: 1 Set point; 2 Erred; 3 Plaintiff; 4 Noonday; 6 Lilac; 7 Monotones; 8 Yields; 9 Asides; 15 On the town; 17 Numerical; 18 Accepted; 20 Essene; 21 Suspire; 25 Clime; 27 Count.

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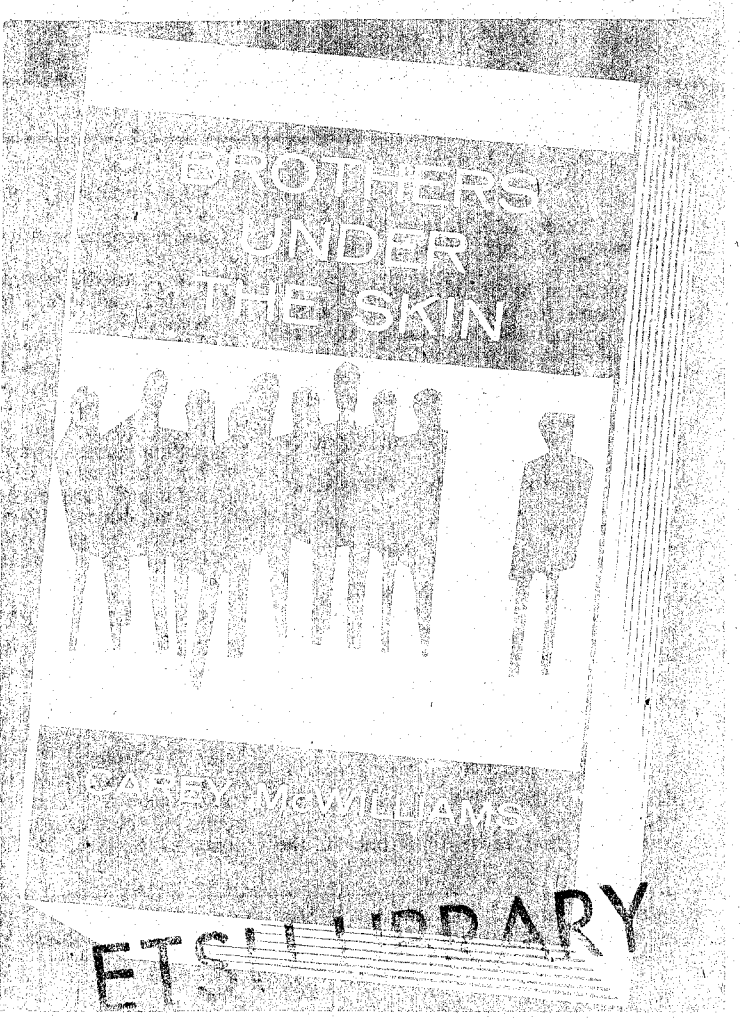

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